

PQ  
9212  
Z5  
N11



PQ  
9212  
Z5 N11

# Cornell University Library

THE GIFT OF

Joaquim Nabuco

A.238452

3/11/09

6896-2

## Contents.

1. Nabuco. The place of Bamoens in literature
2. ——— Bamoens, the lyric poet.
3. ——— The Lusíads as the epic of love.

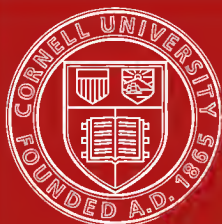
All books are subject to recall after two weeks  
Olin/Kroch Library

DATE DUE

### Place of Camoens in literature.



3 1924 027 723 059



Cornell University  
Library

The original of this book is in  
the Cornell University Library.

There are no known copyright restrictions in  
the United States on the use of the text.

ADDRESS DELIVERED BEFORE THE STUDENTS  
OF YALE UNIVERSITY, ON THE 14TH MAY, 1908

THE PLACE OF CAMOENS  
IN LITERATURE

By  
JOAQUIM NABUCO  
Ambassador of Brazil

~~PP 518~~  
~~C 185~~  
~~YNI~~

A. 23 8452

A handwritten signature, possibly reading "J. C.", written in a cursive style.



# The Place of Camoens in Literature

---

GENTLEMEN OF YALE UNIVERSITY :

When I had read the *LUSIADS* for the first time, I at once wrote a book to tell of my wonder, offering for it the only apology that a tribute of love is always acceptable to a poet. I do not repent of having recorded in print that early impression, which has developed into years of faithful admiration and has kept company with my mind throughout life. Still I always intended to renew to Camoens on my decline the vow of my youth, and it is quite an unexpected fortune for me to be allowed to do it before a great American University.

While literary culture was chiefly under Latin influence the *LUSIADS* was sure of the place claimed for it by the Portuguese race. Now Culture is becoming more diffusely Anglo-German and still every sign is that, both in Anglo-Saxon and in German countries, its great fame will continue unchallenged. These, however, are hard times for the Classics, even for the favourite ones, and some reminder seems necessary for Camoens among the American students, to whom he has always been more or less a stranger, although introduced by Longfellow himself.

It is easy to show what a great poet Camoens is. It is enough to take the *LUSIADS* and read the episode of Ignez de Castro, or the episode of Adamastor, or the episode of the Isle of Love, but for that it is necessary that the audience understand Portuguese. Failing this condition, one must depend on the translator, on foreign help. To deprive a Poet of his language is to take away from him half his soul. Who could translate into

French or Italian Milton's *L'Allegro* or Shelley's *To a Skylark*, without a loss of what was dearest in either to them? Every great poet is great in any language, but none is ever as great in another as in his own, and the loss they suffer by translation may be so material as to affect their relative position in literature. That is the case with Camoens.

Speaking specially of him, he has before any audience not familiar with Portuguese many other disadvantages in a competition. He is above all his Nation's poet; that was not only his fate, it was also his ambition, and, as the poet of Portugal, he suffers from the want of general interest in the Portuguese race, in the part it played in history, in its individuality. The world is always charmed by the names of Greece, Rome, the Italian Republics of the Middle Ages, and that gives an additional lustre to the *Iliad*, the *Æneid*, the *Divine Comedy*. In everything fortune has its part, with nations as well as with men, and in nothing else as much as in fame. When the claim of a poet comes to be weighed, the charm of his own race should therefore be considered. Only an ancient Roman could say with real knowledge to what extent each of the three languages, Italian, Spanish, and Portuguese, sounds like his Latin; certainly much of the mother tongue has been preserved in each of them that was effaced by use or disuse from the other two; still Portuguese is the neglected sister. That must be a case of historical prestige. Then the subject of the *LUSIADS*, the discovery of the East, appeals more to the European than to the American imagination. For the Americans Vasco da Gama is a secondary figure to that of Columbus. The true interest of Discovery centres for us in the crossing of the Atlantic and in the finding of America.



If we sum up the circumstances that will tell against Camoens abroad, we have: the general ignorance of the language in which he wrote; the too great loss he has suffered by translation; the lesser hold that Portugal has on the imagination of the world; the inferior interest of the Portuguese language on this account; and, lastly, the shade that Columbus casts, specially in the American mind, over Vasco da Gama, as heroes of the Age of Discovery. Do not think I am making my favourite appear so handicapped to withdraw him from the field. I stick to his colours. I only want to explain to you the indifference felt for the *LUSIADS* beyond the limits of the Portuguese language.

Since I mentioned the translators, I must assure you I do not intend to disparage them. Camoens would feel proud of their homage. They have all rendered much service to him. Richard Fanshaw's translation, printed in 1655, popularized the *LUSIADS* among the men of letters of the Restoration. It is the one that Milton must have read. That of Mickle was republished several times since 1776, and both Southey and Walter Scott called him a poet and a man of genius. What they did for the 17th and 18th centuries, Quillinan, unfortunately only in part, Aubertin and Richard F. Burton did for the 19th. Still we should not read any of them with the impression that we are reading Camoens himself. None is safe. All put much of their own in the poem. Another translator is needed who will not lend to the poet, but will let him appear entirely alone, without fearing for him. Whenever the rendering of a former translator should be found to be a perfect equivalent of the original in English verse, that ought to be saved. Once perfection is attained, one should simply copy it. Perfection is final. Such a

translation of the LUSIADS would reveal a much greater Camoens to the English speaking races. The master's own picture lies hidden for them under the work of his translators. Why should not this prose version come from Yale? You have the man: Professor Henry R. Lang. Portuguese, however, has such resemblance with Spanish and, although less, with Italian, that a reader of Cervantes or of Dante in the original would easily notice any sensible difference between the Portuguese text and the translation by comparing them.

I will give a stanza of the LUSIADS in Portuguese and in Italian to show the resemblance between the two languages and that of both with Latin. Camoens explains the love of Venus for the Portuguese, whom Bacchus wishes to destroy. I will read it first in English: "Against Bacchus stands the beautiful Venus, attached to the Lusitan race for the many qualities she found in it of her own beloved Romans: the stout hearts; the brilliant star, showed on the lands of Tanger; and the language, which, the more she thinks, the more appears to her, with slight change, to be the Latin." I, 33.

Sustentava contra elle Venus bella  
*Sosteneva contro dilui Venere bella*  
 Affeigoadá á gente Lusitana  
*Afezionata alla gente Lusitana*  
 Por quantas qualidades via nella  
*Per (tutte) quante (le) qualità vedeva in essa*  
 Da antiga tao amada sua Romana:  
*Della antica tanto amata sua (gente) Romana:*  
 Nos fortes coraçoos, na grande estrella,  
*Nei forti cuori, nella grande stella,*  
 Que mostraram na terra Tingitana;  
*Que (essa) avea mostrata sulla terra Tingitana;*  
 E na lingua, na qual quanto imagina,  
*E nella lingua chè più vi pensa (quanto imagina)*  
 Com pouca corrupcao crê que é a Latina.  
*Con poca (corruzione) differenza crede che sia la Latina.*

Let me say a short word for Portugal. Portugal is one of the Nations that play a leading part in History, that is, one of those which accomplish through their initiative some destiny of mankind. In a sense, all modern discoverers may be said to hail from the school of Sagres and to have had Prince Henry-the-Navigator for their patron. Not to speak of the earlier discoveries, like those of Madeira, the Azores, the Cabo Verde Islands, it was a Portuguese, Bartholomeu Dias, who converted the Cape of Tempests into the Cape of Good Hope; another, Vasco da Gama, who first reached India; another, Pedro Alvares Cabral, who discovered Brazil, and to another, Magellan, belong the great honours of the circumnavigation of the Globe. Without the Portuguese discoveries you could not explain Columbus. The influence of the Portuguese navigators was certainly the greatest of all upon him; he must have learned sea-life under their teaching; he married the daughter of one of Prince Henry's captains; he lived for a time in Lisbon, and it was only by some yet unknow mystery that the honour of helping him to carry out his dream passed from King John II of Portugal to Ferdinand and Isabella. In 1580 however, such was then the force of the dynastic principle, Philip the Second of Spain succeeded to the throne of Portugal and the Nation disappeared.

It was a providential accident that the *LUSIADS* was published on the very eve of the country's death. The result, sixty years later, was the resurrection of the nationality, all over the seas, almost intact, and in parts, as in Brazil, even aggrandised. Between 1572, the year of the Poem's birth, and 1640, when the Restoration took place, there had been issued in Lisbon no less than thirteen editions. The name alone was a na-

tional rallying cry. The master-piece raised between the two races of the Peninsula an intellectual frontier, such as *Don Quijote* would have raised in favour of Spain, had Portugal been the dominating Power. No doubt the spirit of Nationality was also kept alive by the legend of Dom Sebastiam, whose return the Portuguese nation expected during centuries; but Sebastianism was, to a great extent, a creation of the *LUSIADS*, its first creation.

Vasco da Gama's voyage is only the episode of the Poem; the divinity to whom it is consecrated, its collective hero, is "the noble Lusian breast, whom both Neptune and Mars obeyed."

" . . . . o peito illustre Lusitano,  
A quem Neptuno e Marte obedeceram."

He sings all those who by valorous deeds free themselves from the Law of Death:

"Aquelles que por obras valerosas  
Se vão da lei da morte libertando."

Like every true national Poem, the *LUSIADS* is cyclical. Its fragments are the nation's legends, each appearing the chief one while it is sung. The national feeling was so strong with the Poet that, both on beginning and on closing his Poem, he is thinking of another great event to sing. The title would admit as many more *cantos* as might be the Portuguese heroic undertakings. Even some other might continue the Poem, if his equal could be found.

This is the first great impression of the *LUSIADS*: Country-worship. The work is planned as the national

Monument. The men and women of Portuguese history are the statues, or medallions; the country's battles, the large frescoes; the voyage to India, the encircling frieze; the discovered seas and lands, the mosaic pavement. One must understand that the Poem is both a national chapel and a national reliquaire, not to question the space given in it to Portuguese history alone. Camoens was a Portuguese before being a poet, as Dante was an Italian and Milton an Englishman. Much of his work is therefore bound to be indifferent to strangers. He meant it. Portions of it can only be appreciated with the Portuguese soul. In every great literary construction there is also, of necessity, a large part, which only forms the structure, the mass, the size of the work. You need not notice that; it is like the dark foliage, through which the flowers are scattered; the barren soil, that forms the cup of the emerald lake. Much more however of Portuguese history than he leaves, so to say, in state of ore, is converted by the Poet into perfect poetry by a single touch of legend or by a touch of Ideal. It is poetry in the *LUSIADS*, all throughout, the voyage of the ships of Vasco da Gama from Lisbon to India; it is poetry, its rendering of the origins of the Portuguese nation; her battles with Spain and with the Moors; the meeting of Queen Maria of Spain and her Father Dom Alfonso IV; the story of Dona Ignez de Castro; poetry, the ever so many epitaphs he writes for the brave who fell fighting for King and Country in distant parts; the itinerary of the envoys of Dom Joam II in search of the land-route to India; the figures he sculptured full size; it is poetry, each of his short drawings of Portuguese scenery, or of any far away domain of "the small Lusitanian home," "*da pequena casa Lusitana.*" "In

Africa she holds maritime settlements; in Asia she is more sovereign than all; in the new fourth Part she cultivates the fields, and, if there was still more World, there she would reach." VII, 14.

The second great impression of the *LUSIADS* is that it is the Poem of the Sea. Camoens spent years of his life on the sea in times when sailing created an intimacy with it, both in calm and in tempest, quite unknown now that the reign of the winds has come to an end. That long, silent and deep communion shows itself in nearly every stanza of his. The *LUSIADS* is a Poem to be read on deck, under the sails. Its action passes on board-ship. Camoens drew from the ocean all the inspiration it contains and passed it to his readers. Alexander von Humbolt writes of him: "Camoens abounds in inimitable descriptions of the never ceasing interchange between the air and the sea, between the varying forms of the clouds, the transformation of the sky, and the different states through which passes the surface of the ocean. He is, in the strictest sense, a great sea-painter." You should read the whole passage in Humbolt's *Cosmos*. What strikes most in Camoens are not, however, so much the descriptions, remarkable for their accuracy and insight of Nature, in which the naturalist delights, as the touches, the solitary verses, that contain all the poetry of the sea. One feels as if on the sea itself, so much so that to read him is really like sailing, as far as imagination is concerned. Still nothing could be more simple than his style. See if you detect any artifice in these verses, remembering, however, that the old myths live in his heart and are his natural exclamations.

"The ships are now sailing over the wide ocean, parting the restless waves; the winds breath softly, and fill the hollow sails; the seas appear covered with white froth, as the prows cut through the consecrated maritime waters, where runs the flock of Proteus."—I, 19.

And again:

"The winds push them so gently as one who has the heaven for his friend; the air is serene, the skies appear without a cloud, or fear of danger; they have already passed the cape of Prasso, of ancient name, in the Ethiopic coast, and the sea uncovers before them the new isles that it encircles and is ever washing around."—I, 43.

In no Poem will you find more perfect pictures, in a few touches only, of the rising and setting of the sun, of the moonlight, of every aspect of the sea, of departure and return, of all that makes the sailor's life, till his burying in a wave.

"Quam facil é ao corpo a sepultura!  
Quaesquer ondas do mar . . ."

—V, 83.

He will call the ships "swimming birds," *nadantes aves*. IV, 49.

What Portuguese ever saw the Tagus coast disappear in the horizon who did not keep the last impression fixed by Camoens? "Our sight is already little by little exiled from the home hills which remained; remained the dear Tagus and the cold heights of Cintra, and on them our eyes were stretching; there also remained the hearts which grief leaves behind, and when the beloved country was all hidden away, we saw nothing but sea and sky."



"Já a vista pouco e pouco se desterra  
 D'aquelles patrios montes que ficavam:  
 Ficava o caro Tejo e a fresca serra  
 De Cintra, e nella os olhos se alongavam;  
 Ficava-nos tambem na amada terra  
 O coração, que as magoas, lá deixavam;  
 E já despois que toda se escondeo,  
 Nao vimos mais em fim que mar, e ceo."

—V. 3.

Of Equatorial Africa he says: "We passed the limit where stops the sun when leading his chariot to the North and where lie the races to which the son of Clymene (Phaeton) refuses the colour of the day."

Here are a few short pictures of morning and sunset. "As soon as the dappled dawn (to take the word of Milton) spreads over the quiet skies her lovely hair and opens the purple gate to bright Hyperion, rising from his sleep."

Now the music of the Poet himself:

"Mas assi como a Aurora marchetada  
 Os fermosos cabellos espalhou  
 No ceo sereno, abrindo a roxa entrada  
 Ao claro Hyperionio, que acordou . . ."

I, 59.

Again: "Already the loving star scintillates in the horizon before the bright sun, and visits, messenger of the day, the earth and the wide sea with a gladdening brow."

"Mas já a amorosa estrella scintillava  
 Diante do sol claro no horizonte,  
 Messageira do dia, e visitava  
 A terra, e o largo mar, com leda fronte."

—VI, 85.

Hear how it sounds like Italian :

"Ma già l'amorosa stella scintillava  
Dinanzi al chiaro sol nell 'orizzonte,  
Messagera del di, e visitava  
La terra e il largo mar con lieta fronte."

The verses give the same fresh, luminous, awakening impression as the words of Shakespeare on the lips of Romeo :

" . . . jocund day  
"Stands tiptoe on the misty mountain tops."

Once more, the morning: "The slow shadows were already dissolving over the flowers of earth in fresh dew." Hear the inimitable beauty of it in Portuguese:

"Tam-se as sombras lentas desfazendo  
Sobre as flores da terra em frio orvalho."  
—II, 92.

Now the sunset. The sun is approaching his "longed-for, tardy, goal, and the God of Night opens for him the gate of his secret ocean home."

"E da casa maritima secreta  
Lhe estava o deus nocturno a porta abrindo."  
—II, 1.

And elsewhere again the evening twilight: "Now the light began to grow uncertain, as the mighty lamp was hiding beneath the horizon, and, full of light, was carrying the day to the antipodes."

"Mas já a luz se mostrava duvidosa,  
Porque a alampada grande se escondia  
Debaixo do horizonte, e luminosa  
Levava aos antipodas o dia."

VIII, 44.

The third great impression is that of Empire building and of sea-power. Camoens has done for Portugal what was never done by her poets for England, but, by doing it for his own Nation, he has celebrated the whole colonial expansion of Europe. The *LUSIADS* is the poem of colonization, of far away enterprise, and therefore the poem of the building up of the New World. It expresses the whole law of immigration, the greatest of all events of modern History, in a single verse: "Any land is country for the strong."

"Que toda terra é patria para o forte."

Edgar Quinet in his *Génie des Religions* says that the *LUSIADS* is the poem of the alliance of the West with the East. . . . "You find in it everywhere, he writes, a soul as deep as the ocean and like the ocean it joins the two opposite shores." No doubt there is in the *LUSIADS* a powerful evocation of the newly discovered East, but the western spirit remains free in the Poet from all its influence, does not suffer its penetration, nor surrenders, like Alexander, to its charm. The East appears to him only as a field of enterprise and action. The two shores that the *LUSIADS* seem destined to link are not so much those of Europe and Asia, as those of Europe and America, because, as has so often been said, the *LUSIADS* is the poem of commerce and industry, the poem of the Modern Age, and in all this the part of America is and shall be much larger than that of Asia.

The fourth great impression is creative power, imagination. Nothing shows it better than the manner in which Camoens converts a dull log-book into grand poetry. The transformation begins with the dream of King Dom Manoel, to whom appear the spirits of the

Ganges and the Indus, to tell that Portugal will rule in India. Follows the departure of the fleet from Lisbon, a picture in which Camoens personifies the Past in the figure of an old man, *with a wisdom all made of experiences*, condemning the whole course of faraway conquest, by which "the old Kingdom would be dispeopled, weakened and transplanted afar." IV, 101.

"Por quem se despovoe o reino antigo,  
Se enfraqueça e se vá deitando a longe . . ."  
—IV, 101.

After the condemnation of the national policy pursued by the Portuguese kings, Camoens renews in a curse against all human daring the bland reproaches of Horace in his Ode to the ship carrying Virgil to Athens.....

"....., qui fragilem truci  
Commisit pelago ratem  
Primus, ....."

"Cursed be the one the first who in the world put a sail to a dry log upon the waves."

"Oh maldito o primeiro, que no mundo  
Nas ondas vela poz em secco lenho!"  
—IV, 112.

Then comes Adamastor, than which there is not a greater creation in modern Literature, a living Myth. Hear how the Giant tells his own story, when he sees that his prophecies will not make the Portuguese turn their ships round. There is not a word that does not belong to the Poet in what is going to be read to you. The Greek orators stopped to have the decrees of

Athens read by the herald. I will ask one of you to be the herald of Camoens.

"I am that hidden and great Cape which you named of Tempests, never known to Ptolemy, Pomponius, Strabo, Pliny, nor to any of those who passed. . . . Here I end all the African coast on this my never seen promontory, which extends towards the Antarctic Pole, whom your presumption now so much offends.

"I was one of the fiercest sons of Earth, like Enceladus, Ægeus and the Centiman; my name was Adamastor and I took part in the war against him that hurls Vulcan's bolts: not that I piled hill upon hill, but, conquering the waves of the ocean, I was Captain of the sea, where wandered the fleet of Neptune which I was pursuing.

"Love for the noble spouse of Peleus led me to undertake such great enterprise. I scorned all the goddesses of Heaven only to love the princess of the waters. One day I saw her with the daughters of Nereus come out all bare on the shore and at once my will was so enslaved that even now I do not feel anything that I long so much for.

"As it would be impossible to obtain her through the ugly hugeness of my face, I determined to take her by arms and I told Doris of my intent. The Goddess in dread speaks to her for me, but she with an honest and candid laughter replied: 'What love of a Nymph would be enough to bear that of a giant?

"Still to free the ocean from so much war, I will seek a way to excuse my honour and to avoid the harm.' The messenger brought me that answer, and, as lover's blindness is great, I would not see the snare and my bosom was filled with abundances of raptures and hopes.

"Fooled, renouncing already war, one night promised by Doris, I saw at a distance the beautiful form of the white Thetis, alone unrobed. Like mad, I run from afar, opening my arms to her who was the life of this body, and I begin to kiss her lovely eyes, her cheeks and her hair.

"Oh, from humiliation, I hardly can say more. Thinking I had in my arms the loved one, I found myself embracing a rugged moun-

tain of the harshest wood. Standing, face to face, before a stone which I clasped for the angelic figure, I remained not a man, but deaf and motionless, and close to a rock, another rock.

"Oh, Nymph the most fair of the ocean, since my presence does not please thee, what would it cost to keep me in this deceit, were it mountain, cloud, dream or nought? Raging and well nigh insane from the grief and the shame suffered there, I left in search of another world where none would scoff at my tears and my despair.

"Meanwhile my brethren were vanquished and in extremest misery placed, some, for the greater surety of the Gods, lying beneath various superposed mountains, and, as against Heaven hands are of no avail, I began, while weeping my misfortune, to receive from an enemy Fate the penalty for my audacity.

"My flesh is converted into solid earth, my bones into rocks, and these limbs, which thou seest, and this form were extended along these long waters; at last, my enormous stature was changed by the Gods into this remote Cape and, to double my woes, Thetis is surrounding me with her waves."

—V, 50-59.

This is the mighty Spirit of the Cape, which will live as long as Table Mountain shall appear before men's eyes. "Already Phlegon and Pyrois were drawing, with the other pair, the radiant chariot, when began to show itself the high headland into which the great giant was converted." V, 61.

The last of the large frescoes worthy of the Renaissance is the Isle of Love, which Venus puts and moves in the ocean before "the second Argonauts, who have just discovered the New World," to give them all the delights of Nature and of Love. The Isle of Love is a poem by itself. Is it an allegory, as the Poet says?...Or did he only say it to pass the Cerberus of the Inquisition? The sensualism of the composition is as naif as that of Eden before nakedness

was felt. The beauty of the scenery equals that of any other landscape in poetry. The whole tapestry might serve as model for many paintings. The *Chase of Diana* of the Domenichino seems copied from it.

This brings me to one more great impression of the LUSIADS: The Renaissance. The LUSIADS is the only one Poem that reflects and resumes it, the only one written under its inspiration. There is in Lisbon a most interesting manuscript of 1549, from a Portuguese painter, Francisco de Hollanda, telling his conversations with Michelangelo in Rome. I only know a fragment translated into French. Camoens never left Portugal, except to fight in Africa and to fight in India. He had, however, the intuition of the Renaissance as perfect as if he had been, like Francisco de Hollanda, in the company of Michelangelo, Baccio Bandinelli, Perino del Vaga, Sebastiano del Piombo, and, last but not least, Vittoria Colonna, marchesa di Pescara. That shows that a new spirit is an all-encircling wave. Perino, for instance, will have painted the ships of Æneas and the struggle of the Giants with Jupiter, in the Villa Doria in Genoa, under the same dictation as Camoens painted Vasco da Gama's ships and the fate of Adamastor. Camoens' work has exactly the character of the later work of Raphael. Between his Venus, his Galatea, his Cupid and those of Raphael, I at least could not distinguish. I never went to the Farnesina that I had not the impression that Camoens and Raphael were twin painters. I keep in my LUSIADS as its best illustration the pictures of the Farnesina.

The Mythology of the LUSIADS seems an evolution of the old Mythology such as would perhaps have taken place if Paganism had lasted ten centuries more by



the side of Christianity. It is living. As a Poetics, it has kept all its plastic force. It is not a *pastiche*; it is a perfect survival. Camoens is much more of a Polytheist in invention, I do not say in criticism, as he never explained his creations, than Goethe. It was once said that the Greeks and the Germans alone have drunk at the cup of the Muses. There is nothing in German literature to compare with the myths of the LUSIADS. The Muses are nowhere so visible as here. The reign of Neptune, for example, had never such splendour; never were held in the Ocean so brilliant courts; never did the sea swarm with so many beautiful Nymphs. The LUSIADS is truly the poem of Venus. It is a censer, in which are burnt to her all the perfumes of the newly discovered East.

A sixth great impression of the Poem is the direction of life to the highest pursuits. In the LUSIADS Camoens has satisfied the four great passions of his soul; in fact, his whole soul: Country, Love, Poetry, and Action. He could not have given them all such an immensity of expansion and such an intensity of glow in any other field. It is that which makes the superiority of the LUSIADS to any purely literary Epic as a guide of life. The Poet lived his inspiration; his work comprises both poetry and action of the highest order.

The spirit of action appears in every stanza, with the spirit of loftiness, that raises it. On every human sphere is marked the lines that divide the highest and the lowest regions of action. He will say, for instance of love: "Love of a lower kind enfeebles the strong;" or "Love badly placed is the more exacting." While he traces in admirable verses in Canto V and in Canto X the loyalty and devotion of the Portuguese people to

its monarch, he says bluntly that the Kingdom will not obey nor suffer a king that will not excel all others.

"A rei nao obedece, nem consente,  
Que nao for mais que todos excellente."

—II, 93.

Because "a weak king makes weak a strong race."

"Que um fraco rei faz fraca a forte gente."

—III, 138.

Of Dom John I he says that "to him strength grew from his heart as to the Hebrew Samson from his hair."

"Joanne a quem do peito o esforço crece,  
Como a Samsão hébreu da guedelha."

—IV, 12.

He sets the standard of courage on a higher basis than the equality of strength, when he says that "it is not like the Lusitans to fear a greater power because of being the smaller."

"Por que não é das forças Lusitanas  
Temer poder maior por mais pequeno."

—III, 99.

He promises never to sing any ambitious man, who wishes to rise to high charges only to exercise his vices in a wider sphere"; nor him "who to court the erring vulgar shall surpass Proteus in change of figure"; nor him "who does not find it just and good respect to pay the sweat of the servile people," and "who taxes with a mean and rapacious hand the toils he does not share." (VII, 84-86.) He condemns thus the malign and cowardly abuse of power: "He who in-

flicts a vile and unjust harm by using the power and the force in which he is invested, does not win; the true victory is to have on one's side right naked and entire."

"Quem faz injúria vil e sem razão,  
Com forças e poder, em que está posto,  
Não vence; que a victoria verdadeira,  
E' saber ter justiça nua e inteira."

—X, 58.

He denounces Christianity for abandoning the tomb of Christ and upholds the freedom of Greeks, Thracians, Armenians and Georgians with eloquence greater than that of Gladstone: "O wretched Christians, are you perchance the teeth sown by Cadmus, which give to each other a cruel death, having all come from the same womb?

O'miseros Christãos! pela ventura  
Sois os dentes de Cadmo desparzidos,  
Que uns aos outros se dão a morte dura,  
Sendo todos de um ventre produzidos?

—VII, 9.

"If you go and conquer alien lands moved by greed of large seignories, do you not see that the Pactolus and the Hermus both roll auriferous sands? In Lydia and Assyria are worked threads of gold; Africa hides in her bosom brilliant veins. May so much wealth move you, since the holy house does not move." VII, 11.

He pays the highest tribute to the liberal poet-King Dom Diniz, for the foundation of the University of Coimbra:

"It was he who first caused the high craft of Minerva to be practised in Coimbra and made the Muses desert the Helicon to tread the rich verdure of the Mondego; all that could be expected

in Athens is given here by proud Apollo; here he distributes the wreaths of baccharis and evergreen laurel twined with gold."—III, 97.

But the gospel of the true American spirit, of what has been named "strenuous life", are the verses in which he exalts the feat of the Portuguese discoverers on their arrival in India. Here you will recognize your own ideal, when read by one of you:

"It is through these dreadful dangers, these grievous labours and fears, that those who are friends of fame win the immortal honours, the highest degrees; not by leaning on the ancient tree of their noble ancestry, nor by lying on golden beds amidst soft sables from Moscovia.

"Not with novel and exquisite viands, not with easy and idle walks; not with the varied and infinite delights that effeminate the generous breasts; not with the never conquered appetites, which Fortune keeps always as her charms not to allow anyone to turn his steps into some earnest heroic deed.

"But by searching with his strong arm honours which he may rightly call his own; by watching and dressing in arrays of steel; enduring tempests and wild waves; vanquishing icy colds in the heart of South and regions bare of shelter; swallowing the tainted food spiced with arduous suffering.

"And by forcing the face that would grow pale to look assured, gay and unbroken, to the red hot balls that, whistling, carry away his comrade's leg or arm: thus the heart contracts a noble callousness, spurner of honors and wealth forged by fortune and not by valor hard and righteous.

"Thus brightens the understanding which long experiences have set at rest and he can see, as from a high sphere, the base intricacy of human dealing wherever in force the covenant of right, unmindful of private affections. This one shall rise, as is due, to illustrious command against his own will, not by soliciting."

I wish to point out one great impression more.

Highest poetical genius may not necessarily require adversity as its atmosphere; but the relation of adversity with it is certainly a striking one in the three cases of Dante, Camoens and Milton. In prosperity Camoens would not have gone to India and without the voyage to India it is impossible to imagine the *LUSIADS*. He might have produced a poem as beautiful; he could not have produced one so stirring. He might perhaps have been even more the poet of the Renaissance, if he had seen Italy instead; but he would not have been the national poet he is. That is the last impression I alluded to: that you see throughout his work the figure of the Poet under the fate intent on the creation of the *LUSIADS*.

He begins full of enthusiasm, certain of the laurel that will crown him. He says to the boy-king Dom Sebastiam, speaking of his verses: "Thou shalt see love of Country, not moved by a vile prize, as it is no vile prize to be renowned by the acclaim of my paternal nest."

Vereis amor da patria, nao movido  
De premio vil, mas alto, e quasi eterno:  
Que não é premio vil ser conhecido  
Per um pregão do ninho meu paterno.

—I, 10.

And the honeymoon of intellectual creation, of the wedding of genius with his work, lasts nearly throughout the composition of the whole Poem. Here and there you detect signs of dejection at the indifference and ungratefulness he experiences. At the end of the fifth Canto he will say that only his own love for his country is forcing the Muses to give renown in the lyre to his hero, as Calliope is not herself a friend of his, nor would

the Tagids leave their golden webs to sing him. He remembers sometimes and resents, but he feels he is fully avenged when he once has pilloried in his Epic the vices and abuses of India. He fights bravely. Only when his task is nearly over he shows weariness. At the beginning of the last Canto, after saying he is losing the taste for writing, he breaks in this lonely vain, that makes one remember Milton on his blindness.

"Years are declining and shortly I shall have stepped from summer into autumn; adversity chills my genius, and no longer I rejoice or pride in it; sorrows are taking me to the river of dark oblivion and eternal sleep; still, Queen of the Muses, grant me to fulfill the vow I made to my country."—X, 9.

Vão os annos decendo, e já do estio  
 Ha pouco que passar ate o outomno:  
 A fortuna me faz o engenho frio,  
 Do qual já não me jacto, nem me abono.  
 Os desgostos me vão levando ao rio  
 Do negro esquecimento e eterno sono:  
 Mas, tu me dá que cumpra, ó gran rainha  
 Das Musas, c'ô que quero á nação minha!

Or, as Mickle puts it:

"Yet let me live to crown the song  
 That boasts my nation's proud renown."

The Poem, however, was now complete, he could see in his manuscript the dazzling wealth he had accumulated during those long years of patient suffering; he had given wings to the prose of Castanheda and Joam de Barros, so that the glory of Portugal would no longer be buried to the world in the Portuguese language, and when he embarks to Lisbon, after exile of sixteen years in Asia, the hope of a national recognition smiles again to him, while no longer firing his heart as

in his youth. What a disappointment! The nation was already on her death-bed. She could not feel the message of immortality he was bringing—she had no sympathy with those who tried to lead her into heroic action or immortal fame, and he pronounces his “No more! No more!”

“No more, Muse, no more. The lyre lies out of tune and my voice has grown harsh, not from singing, but from finding that I have sung to a deaf and insensible people. This nation can not give the favors that most fire the genius, as she is immersed in the taste of covetousness and in the rudeness of an austere, worn out and vile sadness.”—X, 45.

Still see what an incorrigible automaton the poet, the creator, is of the inspiration, which never cares for his own sorrow. The very last words of the *LUSIADS* shall be again an appeal to the young and mad king, Dom Sebastiam, then of age, to go to Africa and rout the Moors, so that the Poet’s “already renowned and content Muse” could sing again and the world might see in him “an Alexander who need not envy the fortune of Achilles.”—X, 156.

The Muse was content, but the instrument was broken. This is one of the great impressions of the *LUSIADS*: the tragedy of persecuted genius at work.

Gentlemen, I only wished to make you more curious of the *LUSIADS* and I hope I have succeeded. I did not come here to submit to criticism what an immemorial prescription raises above it. There is a reason why genius should only be recognized by the masses, and that is, because it draws from them the inspiration that it returns to our mind in poetry, as the cloud gives back to the earth in fertilizing rain the water it drew from the ocean. Here I am remembering the observation



made by Camoens, that the water-spout returns the sea-water without any of its salt. (V, 22). Genius also keeps for itself all the bitterness of the inspiration it imbibes in life's ocean.

We do not fear for Camoens. As soon as the LUSIADS appeared, Torquato Tasso made himself the paranymp *del colto e buon Luigi*, who has ever since ranked by the side of him "who drank so deeply of the Aonian fount"

Esse que bebeu tanto da agua Aonia (V, 87).

and of the other, quoting again from him, "who illumines the whole Ausonia and whose divine voice lulls to sleep his native Mincio and swells the Tiber with pride."

Ess' outro que esclarece toda Ausonia,  
A cuja voz altisona e divina,  
Ouvindo, o patrio Mincio se adormece,  
Mas o Tibre c'o som se ensobervece.

—V, 87.

He achieved, like them, through poetry, an aim beyond the reach of the statesman and of the king, that of imparting immortal life to the spirit of his race. Do not compare the LUSIADS with *La Divina Commedia* or with *Paradise Lost*, or with *Orlando Furioso* and *Gerusalemme Liberata*; compare it with the *Iliad* and the *Æneid*. Dante gives you the spirit of the Middle Ages; Aristo and Tasso try to inspire themselves in an epoch that was no longer theirs; Milton takes his subject beyond the range of human imagination, where it, at least, could not soar with our senses; Camoens alone among the poets remained on the same ground that Homer and Virgil occupied, and he shows that that

ground is eternal, as the one on which was raised the Parthenon.

Camoens, no doubt, borrowed from Virgil, as when he makes Venus the protectress of the Portuguese and of their ships, but whatever he borrows he renovates, as a great painter treating the same subject that inspired a former one. No human mind was ever great enough to owe all to itself alone. Virgil took from Homer more than Camoens from him. The law of genius is that of Molière: "*Je prends mon bien où je le trouve*;" only he must make it truly his own by a different and superior title, as Shakespeare so often did.

Who could say which is more beautiful: the Greek temple or the Gothic Cathedral? It is like asking which is the finer sight: the sea in calm or the sea in tempest. We may love above all the figure of Prometheus; we are bound to do so, as we are his intellectual children, but if we consider mind, not heart, power, not beneficence, we cannot place the Prometheus of Æschylus above the Satan of Milton. No one knows which is the greater of the two: Newton, who found the law of the Universe, or Raphael, who received the wand of beauty. Intellectual measures must be taken in depth and width, as well as in height, and you have to look for them in design, in colour, in music, and not only in words.

Gentlemen, I did not intend, on coming here, to indulge in any invidious comparisons. They nowhere appear so odious as in the enjoyment of Nature and of Poetry. I hope you do not believe in them. The true law of criticism is found in the Genesis: "And God saw that it was good." All is equally good that is really created. You cannot graduate perfection. I did not mean when I took for my subject *the place of Camoens in literature* to put him in line with the other great

poets and take their respective heights. I only wanted to show that he is one of those peaks, which cannot be measured, of the immortal chain of Creators.

## ERRATA.

On page 13, 19th line, read "Cursed be the first" instead of "Cursed be the one the first," etc.

On page 20, the 7th paragraph should read :

"Thus brightens the understanding which long experiences have set at rest and he can see, as from a high sphere, the base intricacy of human dealing. Wherever be in force the covenant of right, unmindful of private affections, this one shall rise, as is due, to illustrious command against his own will, not by soliciting."

On page 22, 7th line, read "lonely vein" instead of "lonely vain," etc.

On page 22, 31st line, read "after an exile" instead of "after exile," etc.

On page 24, 27th line, read "Ariosto" instead of "Aristo."









# CAMOENS—THE LYRIC POET

Address at Vassar College

on April 21, 1909

by

JOAQUIM NABUCO

Brazilian Ambassador

H



## CAMOENS—THE LYRIC POET

---

Last year I spoke of Camoens at Yale University; this year it is my good fortune again to speak of him and to do it before the institution in which, as a true poet, drawing inspiration more from woman than from man, he would prefer, among all others of this country, to anchor his fame. Love was the daily bread of his genius; as a poet, he fed on love: in his early verses, as the singer of his own joys and pains; in his maturity, as the mirror of its power on nature and mankind. I will attempt tonight to give you an idea of the part that the worship of woman plays in his work. But, before, I had better say a word on the part it played in his own life, and for this I will draw a short *raccourci* of that life.

Much has been written on it that seems to me an attempt at vivisection. It is cruel to snatch the innermost secrets of a man from the privacy, nay, from the oblivion, to which he wished his most clement Madonna would relegate them, and to uncover his life before masked posterity, simply because he created a masterpiece.

The principal events in the life of Camoens may be resumed thus. He was born in 1524, and received a strong classical education at Coimbra under his uncle, the chancellor of the University, Frei Bento de Camoens. After 1542 he settled in Lisbon, courting the beauties of the Palace and writing to them no end of verses, until he fell in true love with one of them, a young Lady to

the Queen. This love caused his relegation from the capital and his enlistment for Africa, where he was wounded and lost one of his eyes, an event which disabled him for general courtship. Returning to Lisbon, he wounded a man in a street fight, was incarcerated, and could only free himself by engaging for military service in India. In 1553 he leaves for the East, where he will spend sixteen years, from his 29th to his 45th year. This is the period of the *LUSIADS*. In 1569 he returned to Lisbon, after constant misfortune. In 1572 the *LUSIADS* was published. In 1580 Portugal dies as a nation, thanks to him for sixty years only, and he dies with her. This is the frame of his life. The first half of it belongs to the Lyric, the second to the Epic poet, although the Lyric was never as great in his youth as under the first shadows of decline.

Much remains doubtful in that life. Two men in the present time, one of them now deceased, have done much to reconstruct it, Dr. Theophilo Braga and the German, Dr. Wilhelm Storck. Their names will be forever associated with his as those of the Morgado de Matteus in the first quarter and of Viscount de Juro-menha after the middle of the last century. They have done considerable work, but one wonders if the doubtful points will ever be settled. At the end of the nineteenth century, Dr. Storck, for instance, started the idea that the ever-acknowledged mother of Camoens, Dona Anna de Sá, was only his stepmother, his true mother having died while giving birth to him. Philip the Second of Spain granted a pension to Dona Anna de Sá in the belief that she was the mother of the poet, but Dr. Storck believes more in his own interpretation of a verse of Camoens than in the Royal decree of the Spanish King. Both books, that of Theophilo Braga

and that of Dr. Storck, swarm with new conceptions of the events in the poet's life, nearly all based on their reading of his poems, dated and located by them anew. There is much ingeniousness in their restorations, but I feel sure the poet would wonder at many of the episodes and intentions sworn by them. I must say I speak with the highest respect for their knowledge and their work and under a very great debt, but I cannot help thinking that both feel too sure of their divining gift.

I am afraid that with the advance of years there is a tendency to concentrate admiration and to let one man represent the literature of an epoch or of a people. Something of the kind is happening to me with regard to Camoens; but I have not yet reached the period of fetichism, as Storck, Theophilo Braga, Richard Burton, and others did. Every truly great work must contain much rock by the side of the gold. I find dreary, long passages in Dante, Milton, or Camoens. I am certainly wrong, and they right, as the author reads what he composes at the light of his inspiration; his writing is only the shadow of what rushes on him, either through his brain or through his heart, and which he tried to reduce to words. Other people read without any interior light to illuminate them as to the source of the thought; they receive only the ashes of the poet's inspiration, the echo of his inner song, and they interpret him, each in his own way.

There is a doubtful point in the history of Camoens of the most intense interest. The dispute between his claimant birth-cities move only their own citizens; the dispute about the woman whose love inspired him appeals to a much wider class, that of lovers, and not only to lovers alone, to all who give them a smile. Tra-

dition has fixed her name as Catherina de Athayde, and her rank or employment as that of Lady to the Queen, Dona Catherina. Unfortunately, there was, it seems, more than one Dona Catherina de Athayde in the Royal Palace of Lisbon, at least two: the daughter of Dom Alvaro de Souza, and the daughter of Dom Antonio de Lima. The chief biographers, including Braga and Storck, agree that the poet's enchantress was the latter; the claim of the first, however, has revived since the publication of a passage in the papers of her confessor. The story with the daughter of Dom Antonio de Lima would be this: Camoens saw her in her adolescence, was relegated from Court for aspiring to her, and remained faithful to that love through all his persecutions and her neglect until her death. She never married and died young in Court. The story with the daughter of Dom Alvaro de Souza would be this: Camoens loved her before her marriage, which upset all his life and made him strong enemies in Court. Persecution caused his exile and his enlistment for Africa. When he returns to Lisbon it is to hear of her marriage. Hence his fight with one of her husband's relatives and his departure for India, having nothing else to attach him to his country. There seems to exist more reality in the second story: it accounts better for the tone of his love sonnets, and it alone accounts for those in which he complains of having been sacrificed to an unworthy rival; it accounts for the aggression he made on a relative of hers in the King's service; it accounts better for his distress, for the life he led, and for his departure.

One cannot help seeing a strange coincidence in the assault committed by Camoens on Gonçalo Borges, half-brother of Ruy Borges, the husband of Dom

Alvaro de Souza's daughter. And what to say of her words to her confessor, Frei João do Rosario, from the Dominican Convent of Aveiro, a house to which she was most attached and where she is believed to rest? This is the note about her found in her confessor's papers: "And every time I spoke to her of the poet, exiled because of her, I had always the answer that it was not so and that it was his great soul that had committed him to great enterprises in remote countries." As she died in 1551, the reference here is to the absence of Camoens in Africa. Perhaps she knew not where he had gone. The questioning by her confessor shows that the attachment of Camoens was well known around her, while her answer, although that of a faithful wife, who wished to stop all murmurs, shows she could not hide her admiration for the poet, who had loved her in her maidenhood and loved her still without hope.

The problem is not easy to solve, as the most beautiful love verses of Camoens were written in India and speak of a long sentiment, still in its constancy, although subdued by resignation and through the death of all earthly hope, and there is no doubt, if dates on tombstones are not altered, that the daughter of Dom Alvaro died before his departure for the East. Is it possible that he had not heard of her death? One thing, however, appears most probable from the verses of Camoens: that the young person he so ardently loved married another man, and that he remained faithful to her.

The love of Dante for Beatrice did not die with her marriage; the effect of the marriage on her poet was only to render that love immortal by making her unattainable to him. There is much resemblance between

the love verses of Camoens and those of Dante and Petrarca indicating a similar story. The intensity of despair which he puts in his verses speaks of an obstacle more hopeless than the opposition of others to the two lovers's will. The love that he received and which he pours forth in his *LUSIADS* did not come from the look of a young girl, soon after, and forever, an absent and silent image in his mind. It speaks of the full reciprocation of two hearts beating in unison.

Wordsworth, asking a critic not to scorn the sonnet, reminded him of Shakespeare and of Camoens,

Camoens soothed with it an exile's grief,

and when Elizabeth Browning wanted a title for her love sonnets, that would veil for a moment her authorship, Browning could not find a better one than this—*Sonnets from the Portuguese*. These two reminiscences are sufficient to show the deep impression caused among the poets of England in past generations by Camoens's sonnets. Some of them appeared in the little book of Lord Strangford, *Poems from the Portuguese of Luis de Camoens*, printed in 1803, and many more in the *Memoirs of the Life and Writings of Luis de Camoens* of John Adamson, published in 1820. The admiration of Robert Southey, expressed by his own translations, contributed much to place the love poems of Camoens alongside those of Dante and Petrarca. In Camoens, as in Dante, the epic eclipses entirely the lyric, still the lyric is of first magnitude. The reason is that the epic, or collective, light is more powerful of its nature than the lyric, or personal, one. It is a very considerable work, the lyric work of Camoens. Some pretend that even without the *LUSIADS* it would be enough



to assure him his rank among the greatest poets. I believe that without the *LUSIADS* his name, owing to the narrower circle of Portuguese, would not compete with *Petrarca*, and I am afraid that he would not even be recognized in Portugal and Brazil as infinitely above all other native poets. I do not speak for myself. I place him in a solitary sphere in the literature of the two sister languages, Portuguese and Spanish. But when I come to Dante and *Petrarca*, I must say it seems to me that they closed the cycle of the love sonnets, and that all done after them is either implied or in germ in their work. In fact, Dante's sonnet

Tanto gentile e tanto onesta pare  
La donna mia, quand' ella altrui saluta

stands above all love sonnets as the bourn not to be twice attained, and which recedes with each new generation of poets that passes. I thought I had better remind you of it, hoping it will be a lifelong friend of yours, as it has been of mine.\*

\*Tanto gentile e tanto onesta pare  
La donna mia, quand'ella altrui saluta,  
Che ogni lingua divien, tremando, muta,  
E gli occhi non ardiscon di guardare.

Ella sen va, sentendosi laudare,  
Benignamente d'umiltà vestuta;  
E par che sia una cosa venuta  
Di cielo in terra a miracol mostrare.

Mostrasi sì piacente a chi la mira,  
Che dà per gli occhi una dolcezza al core,  
Che intender non la può chi non la prova.

E par che della sua labbia si muova  
Uno spirito soave e pien d'amore  
Che va dicendo all'anima: sospira!

Still it is a splendid crop that of the seeds sown by the Italian love poets of the early Renaissance, and nowhere they produced flowers so much like the primitive ones as in the verses of Camoens. I cannot associate Shakespeare to them, as Shakespeare is a world apart, entirely a new projection on the whole domain of Poetry, but Dante, Petrarca and Camoens come from the same divine pattern; the poetical soul of the first resounded to the end in the second, and their combined spirit passed on to the third and spent itself among men. Camoens as a lyric is the echo of Dante and Petrarca: the echo not of their songs, but of their singing. The three make a chain unique in Poetry. They were detached from the same chorus, which they will have joined again.

Here is one of his sonnets, describing the first impression he had of no longer being free. It was in church, like Petrarca, and on a Holy Friday. I will translate it into English prose. Translations in verse do not associate only two different literatures, as it is inevitable in any translation; they generally associate also two very unequal poets:

"The religious rites were being celebrated in the temple where every being glorified the divine Maker, who on that day had restored his work with his own sacred blood. Love, who watched the occasion, when I felt my will should be safest, stormed my mind and sight with the rarest angelic figure. Believing that the place defended me from his wonted ways, and not knowing that none was too confident to escape him, I let myself be made captive. But today, realizing that he wished me for your slave, I repent of the time I was free."

O culto divinal se celebrava  
 No templo donde toda creatura  
 Louva o Feitor divino, que a feitura  
 Com seu sagrado Sangue restaurava.

Amor alli, que o tempo me aguardava,  
 Onde a vontade tinha mais sègura,  
 Com uma rara e angelica figura,  
 A vista da razão me salteava.

Eu, crendo que o lugar me defendia  
 De seu livre costume, nao sabendo  
 Que nenhum confiado lhe fugia;

Deixel me captivar; mas hoje vendo,  
 Senhora, que por vosso me queria,  
 Do tempo que fui livre me arrependo.

This idea that love conceals itself in the eyes of one who attracts us, to fall by surprise on its prey, comes again and again in different forms:

"The fond and sweet bird is arranging its plumage with its little bill and in the leavy branch it pours forth without restraint its joyful and amorous verses, while the cruel fowler, avoiding in silence and on tiptoe its sight, directs his arrow with a sure eye against its heart giving it on the Stygian lake an eternal nest. In this way my heart, that was moving about in freedom, although long destined to this fate, was wounded where it least expected, as the blind archer waited to take me unaware, concealed in your clear eyes."

Está o lascivo e doce passarinho  
 Com o biquinho as pennas ordenando;  
 O verso sem medida, alegre, e brando,  
 Despedindo no rustico raminho.

O cruel caçador, que do caminho  
 Se vem callado, e manso desviando,  
 Com prompta vista a setta endireitando,  
 Lhe dá no Estygio Lago eterno ninho.

Desta are o coração, que livre andava,  
 (Posto que já de longe destinado)  
 Onde menos temia, foi ferido.

Porque o frecheiro cego me esperava  
 Para que me tomasse descuidado,  
 Em vossos claros olhos escondido.

This is the usual tone of his sonnets: praises and complaints, caresses and fears:

"Spring is concentrating its colours in your image, on your cheeks, on your lips, it spreads on your brow roses, lilies and carnations. In colouring your features, Nature shows all its art. Hill and valley, river and forest are jealous of such tints. But if you do not allow him who loves you to cull the fruit of those flowers, your eyes will lose all their charm. As it is no use, fair Dame, for Love to sow loves in you, if your condition only produces thorns."

Está-se a Primavera trasladando  
 Em vossa vista deleitosa e honesta;  
 Nas bellas faces, e na boca, e testa,  
 Cecens, rosas e cravos debuxando.

De sorte, vosso gesto matizando,  
 Natura quanto pôde manifesta;  
 Que o monte, o campo, o rio, e a floresta  
 Se estão de vós, Senhora, namorando.

Se agora não quereis que quem vos ama  
 Possa colher o fructo destas flores,  
 Perderão toda a graça os vossos olhos.

Porque pouco aproveita, linda Dama,  
 Que semeasse o amor em vós amores,  
 Se vossa condição produz abrolhos.

—XXVIII.

Compare with this one:

Give back this whiteness to the lily and this crimson colour to the pure roses. Give back to the sun the luminous flames of those eyes that condemn thee to constant robbery. Give back the delightful cadence of this voice to the sweet siren, and this grace to the Graces, who complain of having theirs less serene on thy account. Give back beauty to beautiful Venus, wisdom, genius,

art to Minerva, and purity to chaste Diana. Divest thyself of this greatness, all made of gifts, and thou shalt remain with thyself alone: that is with inhumanity.

Tornai essa brancura á alva assucena,  
E essa purpurea côr ás puras rosas:  
Tornai ao Sol as chammas luminosas  
De essa vista que a roubos vos condena.

Tornai á suavissima sirena  
De essa voz as cadencias deleitosas;  
Tornai a graça ás Graças, que queixosas  
Estão de a ter por vós menos serena.

Tornai á bella Venus a belleza;  
A Minerva o saber, o engenho, e a arte;  
E a pureza á castissima Diana.

Despojai-vos de toda essa grandeza  
De d'ões; e ficareis em toda parte  
Comovosco só, que he só ser inhumana.

—cxx.

He studies the nature of love in his own heart, the maze of its contrasts:

Love is a fire that burns without being seen; a wound that aches, without our minding it; it is a discontented contentment; a pain that makes one rave without feeling the pain. It is to care for nothing but always to care; to live solitary among people; not to feel happy in bliss; to think one wins when one is losing.

It is to remain in prison for pleasure; to serve her who wins her winner; to be loyal to one who kills us. But how can its favour produce so much conformity in human hearts, being love so contrary to itself?

Amor é um fogo que arde sem se ver;  
E' ferida que doe, e não se sente;  
E' hum contentamento descontente;  
E' dor que desatina sem doer.

E' um não querer mais que bem querer,  
 E' solitario andar por entre a gente;  
 E' um não contentar-se de contente;  
 E' cuidar que se ganha em se perder.

E' um estar-se preso por vontade;  
 E' servir a quem vence o vencedor;  
 E' um ter com quem nos mata lealdade.

Mas como causar pôde o seu favor  
 Nos mortaes corações conformidade,  
 Sendo a si tão contrario o mesmo amor?

Here is another that belongs to the metaphysics of love, the essence of Platonism. It is composed on the Petrarchian motif:

L'amante nel amato si trasforme

in the *Triumph of Love*.

"The lover, by virtue of so much thinking of it, transforms himself in the loved thing. I have nothing else to desire, as the desired object is within myself. If my soul is transformed in it, what else could the body obtain? It may rest with itself alone, as the other soul is already tied to it. But this lovely and pure half-Goddess, who, so perfectly as the accident to its subject, conforms herself to my soul, is in my thought as the idea, and the live and pure love of which I am made, as simple matter, seeks its form."

Transforma-se o amador na cousa amada,  
 Por virtude do muito imaginar:  
 Não tenho logo mais que desejar,  
 Pois em mim tenho a parte desejada.

Se nella está minha alma transformada,  
 Que mais deseja o corpo de alcançar?  
 Em si sómente pode descansar,  
 Pois com elle tal alma está liada.

Mas esta linda e pura semidéa,  
Que como o accidente em seu sujeito,  
Assi com a alma minha se confôrma,

Está no pensamento como idéa;  
E o vivo e puro amor de que sou feito,  
Como a materia simples busca a fórma.

—X.

He looks as a swan who would sing his last song  
every day:

"The swan, when he feels that his last hour is coming, spreads with a doleful voice a greater harmony along the desert shores. He wishes to enjoy a lengthier day and weeps its early flight. Under the keen grief of departure, he celebrates the sad end of the journey. So, my lady, when I saw the sad end reserved for my devotion, finding myself without a thread of hope, I sang with sweeter accent your disfavours, your false faith and my own love."

O cysne, quando sente ser chegada  
A hora que põe termo á sua vida,  
Harmonia maior, com voz sentida,  
Levanta por a praia inhabitada.

Deseja lograr vida prolongada,  
E della está chorando a despedida:  
Com grande saudade da partida,  
Celebra o triste fim desta jornada.

Assi, Senhora minha, quando eu via  
O triste fim que davam meus amores,  
Estando posto já no extremo fio;

Com mais suave accento de harmonia  
Descantei por os vossos desfavores  
La vuestra falsa fé, y el amor mio.

—XLIII.

Here is one that shows well how he imbibes in nature  
all day long the poetry which he turns into love ca-  
dences:

The loveliness of these cool mountains, the shade of the verdant chestnuts, the still flowing of the rivulets, from which all sadness is banished afar; the hoarse sound of the sea, the strange land, the setting of the sun behind the hills, the gathering of the late flocks, the soft war of the clouds in the skies; in fine, all that incomparable Nature offers with such variety, makes me only suffer, if I do not see thee. Without thee all tires and displeases me; without thee I am ever tasting, in the greatest joys, the greatest loneliness.

A formosura desta fresca serra,  
E a sombra dos verdes castanheiros;  
O manso caminhar destes ribeiros,  
Donde toda a tristeza se desterra:

O rouco som do mar, a estranha terra,  
O esconder do Sol pelos outeiros,  
O recolher dos gados derradeiros,  
Das nuvens pelo ar a 'branda guerra:

Em fim, tudo o que a rara natureza  
Com tanta variedade nos offrece,  
Me está, se nao te vejo, magoando.

Sem ti tudo me enoja, e me aborrece;  
Sem ti perpetuamente estou passando  
Nas móres alegrias, mór tristeza.

—CCLXXI.

We come to one of the most beautiful of his sonnets, the one telling of his separation from his beloved one, whether forever or for days, no one knows. It is the Sonnet 24 of his *Rhythmas*. This sonnet is located by Braga on the morning of Camoens's exile from Lisbon, and by Storek on the morning of his departure for India; but are great events really necessary to make two dividing lovers shed streams of tears? Does not the shortest separation often appear tragic enough to them, without any need of exile and persecution? This is a point which lovers can judge better than critics. On



the face of it, it was a separation of which it can be said that all was lost, but love.

"That early morning, so sad, yet so joyful, all full of sorrow and of pity, as long as loving remembrance will exist on earth, I wish it to be forever celebrated. It alone, when coming out fresh and dappled to light the earth, saw the tearing away of two lovers, whose wills shall never be divided. It alone saw running from their eyes threads of tears, which joined into a large stream. It alone heard the doleful words, which could render the fire cold and give rest to the damned souls."

Aquella triste e lédá madrugada,  
Cheia toda de mágoa,e de piedade,  
Em quanto houver no mundo saudade,  
Quero que seja sempre celebrada.

Ella só, quando amena e marchetada  
Sahia, dando á terra claridade,  
Vio apartar-se de uma outra vontade,  
Que nunca poderá ver-se apartada.

Ella só vio as lagrimas em fio,  
Que de uns e de outros olhos derivadas,  
Juntando-se, formaram largo rio.

Ella ouviu as palavras magoadas,  
Que puderam tornar o fogo frio,  
E dar descanso ás almas condemnadas.

Here you see his force, his earnestness, his power of moving the heart, so great that one can hardly realize that so much emotion can hold within so few lines.

Here is another in the same strain, although with a touch of resignation, which, strange to say, comes from the loss of all hope:

"What more can I expect from the World, if having given it so much love, I only got back discontent and disfavor, and finally death, than which nothing could be more cruel. Since life does not satiate me of living, and since I find that a great grief does not

kill, if there is anything that gives a stronger pain, I am ready to try it, as I can endure all. Death to my great grief has insured me against all possible calamities. I have lost her whom fear taught me to lose. In life I received only unlove; in death, the great sorrow that remains to me. It seems that only for this I was born."

Que poderei do Mundo já querer,  
Pois no mesmo em que puz tamanho amor,  
Não vi senão desgosto e desfavor,  
E morte, em fim, que mais não pôde ser?

Pois me não farta a vida de viver,  
Pois já sei que não mata grande dor,  
Se houver cousa que magoa dê maior,  
Eu a verei, que tudo posso ver.

A morte, a meu pezar, me assegurou  
De quanto mal me vinha: já perdi  
O que a perder o medo me ensinou.

Na vida desamor sómente vi;  
Na morte a grande dor me ficou.  
Parece que para isto só nasci.

I will read a last one, his celebrated sonnet

Alma minha gentil que te partiste,

considered the most beautiful of all. The story, as I said, with the daughter of Dom Antonio de Lima makes Camoens leave Portugal in her lifetime, and write his sonnet on her death years afterwards in India. Braga pretends that he wrote it as late as in 1561. If this sonnet had been written in India on the delayed news of the death of one seen for the last time years before, as Braga believes, the verses would have more the character of a reminiscence than that of burning love, and they would probably contain some mark of the poet's sad wanderings and of the great work he was then absorbed in.

This sonnet has been often translated into English verse. The two first verses are nearly the same as the first in Petrarca's sonnet

Quest'anima gentil che si departe,  
Anzi tempo chiamata al altra vita;

but, if the start is the same, the flight is wholly different:

"My own gentle soul, who so early hast departed disconsolate from this life, may you enjoy forever the rest of heaven and I live here on earth with my sorrow. If in the ethereal seat, to which thou didst ascend, memories of this life are allowed, do not forget that ardent love which thou hast seen so pure in my look. And if the grief, that remains with me from the pain without remedy of losing thee, deserves any reward, beseech God, who has shortened thy years, to take me from here to see thee as quickly as from my eyes He took thee."

Alma minha gentil, que te partiste  
Tao cedo desta vida descontente,  
Repousa lá no Ceo eternamente,  
E viva eu cá na terra sempre triste.

Se lá no assento Ethereo, onde subiste,  
Memoria desta vida se consente,  
Não te esqueças de aquelle amor ardente,  
Que já nos olhos meus tão puro viste.

E se vires que póde merecer-te  
Alguma cousa a dor, que me ficou  
Da mágoa sem remedio de perder-te;

Roga a Deus, que teus annos encurtou,  
Que tão cedo de cá me leve a ver-te,  
Quão cedo de meus olhos te levou.

The melody of this short poem could not be exceeded in our language: in it the predominant sentiment of the race, the *saudade*, finds its perfect expression.

I should not leave Vassar College without trying to plant here the word *saudade*. In the poems I have read to you I met it many times, but how to translate a sentiment that is not expressed in any other language by a single word? That word of ours we claim to be the most beautiful word of any language; we consider it the gem of human speech. It expresses the sad memories of life, but also its abiding hopes. The tombs bear that inscription, *saudade*; the lovers' message to each other is *saudade*; *saudade*, the message of the absent to his country and to his friends. *Saudade*, you see, is the ivy of the heart, attached to its ruins and growing in its solitude. To render its meaning, you would have to take four English words: remembrance, love, grief and longing. Without any one of them you could not wholly express the feeling. Still *saudade* is simply a new form, polished by tears, of the word *soledade*, solitude, just as our word *adeus*, *adieu*, is the survival of the two words, once said as farewell: *A Deus*, *A Dieu*, to God. "I commend thee to God." Solitude creates loneliness; *saudade* is the feeling of loneliness, after the loss of what kept company to one's heart: either the country, the home, the friends, any whom we love or loved, be that separation a passing one, or be it death. Hence the infinite scale of the word to express all states of mind characterized by the void of the loved thing in one's soul. It is most singular that only one human race has distilled from the word *solitude* its impression over the heart; that only one possesses a word for regret at loss or absence, mingled with the wish to see again, and that only one has that sentiment constantly on its lips. The word *longing* must have been an attempt at a comprehensive word for the same feeling, taken not from the word loneliness, but from

the word *longe*, being apart, *far away*, but it did not obtain the same triumph in English as *saudade* in Portuguese, perhaps because of your race not being a nostalgic one. *Longing*, indeed, is not the popular coin of your language, while *saudade* is the soul, the essence, of Portuguese, and gives to it the perfume of a field of violets. That word is enough by itself to show the solitary nature of the race, its homesickness, its attachments to its early impressions, its innate sadness, the sadness of those who never care for anything future that has no roots in the past.

Of the light, fancy verses of Camoens, the *Letter to a Lady* gives a sufficient idea. It is a pure *badinage*, but it shows how his imagination was as active in the sports of his heart as in its pangs:

"Near the clear source of the Ganges the dwellers live on the perfume of the flowers that grow on the hill. As the senses alone can give food to life, it is no wonder, if those live by smelling, that I live by seeing you.

"There is a tree which gets so sad among the general contentment, that, when it is night, it blossoms and at daylight it loses its leaves. Myself, who feel all the price of looking at you, I get sad at your sight, as I know I do not deserve the glory of being sad.

"A King of great power trained himself with poison, so that he would not suffer, if, as was the custom, it was ever given to him by others. With me, who since a child accustomed my sight to all that is suffering, it happens that pain only hurts me, when absent.

"There is a disease of which one gets cured by a secret of nature on the simple sight of a bird. From the illness which love fosters within me, I would be cured by seeing that Phoenix, were it not for the dropsy that remains of wishing more the more I get.

"Love, in order to keep its power, made a reluctant will enamoured of a statue and then converted the statue into a woman. Whom

could I complain of, or accuse of deceiving me, if I follow and seek an image, which from human is turning herself into marble?

"If any one swears false on the waters of a certain source, he at once gets blind. You, tyrant of my freedom, you order, when I speak the truth, that I see you no more.

"The palm is so hard and so strong that weight does not break it; on the contrary, in its conceit, it rises still more when bended. The harm you do me does not bend only my constancy, it bends also my desire; yet, at once, I love you still more.

"If any one puts out the eyes of the swallow, the mother immediately goes for an herb that makes others grow. I have my eyes fixed on yours, which are stars: those of the understanding got blind, but came those of reason, so that I could enjoy my torment.

"While sailing towards the East we discovered a river and wondered that the wood that fell in it was changed into stone. Yet, it is greater wonder that a heart be converted into diamond in a flow of tears.

"A dumb fish can impress on the line and on the rod such a deadly shock that the arm of the angler will be paralyzed. If my eyes begin to drink of this rapturous poison they will not be able to move at anything else that appears.

"How many contradictions love causes to double our torments! The same lovely sight, that makes me content, condemns me to sadness, as the flame, that goes out with the wind, with the same wind is kindled again."

Like the Italian poets, Camoens wrote also *Canções*, *Canzones*. In these he was not limited to a small number of verses, and could let free his inspiration. They are long talks with himself about his loves, his hopes, and his desires, and nowhere the thrilling and melodious kind of soul he possessed appears in such a light:

One of the most beautiful is the Canção X, written in the East, on the Arabian coast. I will read it in

part. Braga calls it "the deepest expression of human grief." I would not say that, after the *Psalms* and the *Book of Job*, and the *Divine Comedy*; I do not compare love sufferings with the real tragedies of the soul; but I agree that the kind of grief there is in disappointed love was never expressed in a more harmonious and touching strain.

"Here I had no place where to lie, not a single hope on which a moment to rest my head; all was for me pain, cause for suffering, yet not for dying, as I had to undergo my whole fate, never once appeased. These furious seas, I tame them with my sighs. These winds, they seem to refrain, importuned by my voice. Only the severe Heaven, and the stars, and the ever cruel fate find pleasure in my eternal suffering, and in showing themselves indignant against a piece of clay, a vile worm of the earth.

If after so many labours I got at least to know for certain that some hour I was remembered by the clear eyes which I once saw; if this sad voice, breaking the distance could touch the angelic ears of the one on whose sight I once lived, and if she turned a little on herself, revolving in her anxious mind the times gone by of my sweet faults, of the dear pains and wraths, suffered and sought for her, and were she, however late, to become compassionate and to weigh in her heart my woe, and within herself to think she had been cruel to me. . . . If I knew only that, it would be rest for the life remaining to me and how would I caress my suffering! . . . Ah! Senhora! Senhora!"

"How rich you are, that here, so far away, you feed me with joy only by such a sweet fiction! As soon as the thought portrays you, all pain and all grief disappears. With your remembrance only I feel safe and strong against death's fiercest countenance and at once hopes flock to me, thanks to which the brow, rendered more serene, converts the hardest torments into gentle and suave longings.

Here I remain with my memories inquiring about you, from the amorous winds that blow from the parts where you dwell; asking the birds, which there take their flight, if they saw you, what were you doing and talking, where, how, with whom, what day and what hour. And the tired life recovers new spirits, with which to win fortune and toil, only to return to see you, to serve and to love you

again. But the ardent desire, that never suffered delay, rashly reopens the wounds of my suffering.

And thus I live. . . . If any one asked thee, my Canzone, why I do not die, answer that because death is my life."

Now we come to the eleventh Canção, certainly his highest title as a love poet. You will first take into account the great difference between a Portuguese poem and an English translation, and this one by a foreigner, who learned your language at random, and then judge by yourselves if it deserves or not the praise bestowed upon it by his admirers. Dr. Wilhelm Storck, his German coryphoeus, calls this Canzone "the queen of all Canzones of all poets preceding or following Camoens or his contemporaries." Richard Burton, his English coryphoeus, agrees with the Morgado de Matteus, one of the Portuguese worshippers of Camoens, in ranking the Canção

Vinde cá, meu tão certo Secretario,

with two others of his, higher than the finest Canzones of Petrarca. I do not like ranking masterpieces. All classification of them is only a personal caprice of the critic. To be able to weigh comparatively the inspiration of the most beautiful Canzones of Petrarca and Camoens would require a poet superior to either, possessing not only the gifts of both, but the spirit of their two Ages and languages. A critic may be a very unassuming person, but his profession, more than that of the judge, as he makes his own law, is by itself an assumption of superiority. Willing and reasoned admiration is never such a perfect tribute as the unconscious one, that which does not know where it begins and where it ends. I am content to say that the



eleventh *Canção* seems to me as beautiful a strain of harmony as ever fell from a human instrument; that no love tears glisten purer in Poetry than the ones trembling forever in those verses.

"Come here, faithful Secretary of the complaints I am always making, paper, on which I unload my heart. Let us tell the unreasons which the inexorable fate, deaf to tears and prayers, deals me since I live. Let us throw a few drops of water on so much fire and kindle with our outcries a torture new to all memories. Let us tell such wrong to God, to the world, to men, and, in fine, to the winds, to which so many times I have confided it in vain, as I am telling it now. But as I was born for endless errors, I do not doubt that this will be one more of them. And since I am so far from finding my right way, I should not be accused for erring also in this. At least I have this one refuge for speaking and for erring, without offense, freely. How sad he who is content with so little.

"I have long desisted from seeking cure in complaining; but who suffers is forced to cry out, if the pain is excessive; I will shout, though the voice is weak and small to relieve me, and that not even with shouting the grief will abate. Who will grant me at least to pour tears and infinite sighs, equal to the sorrow that dwells within me? But who could ever measure grief by tears or cries? Still I will tell thee that which wrath, pain and their recollection teach me. . . As no other pain is by itself harder or stronger. Come you, who are in despair and listen to me, and let fly away those who live on hope, or those who imagine themselves in it, because love and fortune combine to leave them power to ascertain the true measure of the woes that may befall them.

"When I came fresh to light from the maternal tomb, unhappy stars at once put me in bondage, barring from me my true will; I knew a thousand times in happiness the better and followed constrained the worse. To give me ever torments conforming with my years, they ordered that, when still an infant, I gently opened my eyes, a blind boy would wound me. The tears of childhood came already mingled with enamoured longings; my cries in the cradle sounded to me like sighs. Destiny and age were in accord, and when they rocked me with sad love songs, my nature at once was lulled into sleep, so much akin was it to sadness.

"My nurse was some weird creature as destiny did not wish that a woman had such name for me, nor was any who could. Thus

was I suckled; I drank from a child the amorous poison that I would drink in full age, so that it would not kill me by my being accustomed to it. Then I saw the image and the likeness of that feral human creature so beautiful, who reared me at the breasts of Hope, and of whom I afterwards saw the original, which makes of my great errors a proud and sovereign sin. It seems it had the human form, but it scintillated divine spirits. It had a demeanour and a presence that all evil felt vain glory at its sight; its shade and light excelled the power of Nature.

"What a kind so new of torment had love, that was not only tried on me, but wholly executed! Implacable harshness had ashamed and shaken from its purpose the fervent wish, that gives strength to thought. Here were phantastic shades, brought from some daring hopes; with them the true blisses were also painted and feigned, but the pain of the contempt which I received, putting every fancy in confusion, disconcerted its ingenious dreams. My occupation was to guess and to hold as truth what was guess, and then to unsay myself in shame; in fine to lend a contrary sense to what I saw, to find reasons for everything,—while the unreasons were much more evident.

"I do not know if she knew that she was stealing my own vitals with her rays and that they fled to her subtly through my eyes. Little by little, invincibly, they went from me, just as the ardent sun draws the subtle humours from the veil of the skies. In fine the pure and transparent mien, compared to which this name of "beautiful" remains without value, the sweet and compassionate moving of the eyes, which held the souls in suspense, were the magic herbs which Heaven made me drink and which for long years have transformed me into another being, and I was so pleased with seeing myself so changed, that I deceived my pains with my dreams, and before my eyes I held a veil to hide from myself the growing harm that was increasing within me, like one who was brought up with caresses from him for whom he had grown.

"Who could paint the absent life, my discontent at all I saw; my feeling always away from wherever I was; my speaking without knowing what my words meant; my going without seeing through where, and my sighing without knowing I was sighing, when that state most tormented me, and I felt the pain that came to the world from the waters of Tartarus, more severe than all others and which used to convert soft grief into fiercest rage? Then mad with pain, and not wishing to cease to love, I turned in another direction for vengeance the wish deprived of hope, and which hardly could be changed. Then the sweet remembrance of the

past, a torment soft, pure, and doleful, came to convert those furies into tears of love.

"What excuses did I not seek with myself alone when fond love did not suffer me to find fault in the loved thing, and how dearly loved! Such were the remedies imagined by fear of torment, which taught my life to maintain itself through snares. In this I passed a part of it, and in that part, if I ever had one joy, short, imperfect, timid and wrong, it was only the seed of a protracted and bitterest torture. This continuous course of sadness, those steps vainly scattered, went on extinguishing the ardent taste of those enamoured thoughts which I had fixed so earnestly in my soul and with which I had fed my tender nature. The latter through the long habit of adversity, to which no human strength can resist, ended by turning to the taste of feeling sad.

"Thus I went changing my life into another, not I, my own adverse fate, and even so I would not have changed that life for any other. It made me leave the loved paternal nest and cross the long sea, which so many times threatened my life. Now experiencing the rare fury of Mars, who wished me at once to touch in my own eyes his bitter fruit, and in this escutcheon of mine you will see the picture of the terrible fire. Now a pilgrim, wandering among the different Nations, apart in languages, costumes and qualities, only to follow thee Fortune, that consumest life's ages, carrying before each of them a hope brilliant as a diamond, but which when it falls from thy hand one recognizes to be only useless glass.

"Human pity failed me; I saw the friendly people hostile at my first danger and in the second no land could I find where I could set my foot; even air to breathe was denied me; I had not for me either time or the world. What an arduous and deep mystery is this! To be born to live and yet to be refused all that the world has to give for life. And not to find a way of losing it, it being lost so many times already! In fine there was no transe of fortune, nor peril, nor doubtful cases, (injustices from those whom the confused law, the ancient abuse of the world, renders powerful over other men), that I did not bear, attached to the faithful column of my suffering, which the importuning persecution of ill broke a thousand times to pieces by the strength of its arms.

"I do not recall such suffering, as one who after a raging storm tells of its wrecks inside a quiet port, as even now wavering fortune compels me to undergo so many miseries that I fear to take a single step more. Already I do not recoil before any coming evil, nor do I pretend to any good which may be failing me, as I find human cunning of no avail against fate. I am pending from a sov-

ereign force, from Divine Providence. What I see and dream, sometimes. I take it as a comfort for so many wrongs. But when human frailty throws its eyes on current fortune and only obtains a memory of past years, what waters I then drink and what bread I eat, are sad tears, which I never can control except by building in the imagination phantastical pictures of joy.

"If it were possible for time to turn backwards, as memory does, over the traces of the first age and, webbing again the old story of my sweet errors, it carried me amidst the flowers of the youth, which I once saw, and, then the remembrance of the loved past becoming greater content for me, if I enjoyed again the suave and pleasant talk where stood one and other keys of my present thought, the fields, the walks, the signals, the sight, the snow, the rose, the beauty, the grace, the sweetness, the courtesy, the simple friendship that deviates away all earthly and impure intention, and the one like which I never saw any other! Alas, vain memories! Whereto do you take my frail heart, as I cannot yet well tame this useless desire of yours!

"No more, *Cangão*, no more, as I would speak like this for a thousand years without feeling it, and if by chance they accuse thee of being long and heavy, answer that the water of the sea cannot hold in such a narrow vase. Nor do I sing those delicate points for love of praise; I tell pure truths really lived by me. Would God they were dreams!"

I think I have read tonight enough of Camoens to give you the idea that he really deserves to be counted among the greatest lyric poets. I believe the gems of his poetry placed before you will last as long as the other literary heirlooms of mankind. Modern reading is so indiscriminate that the popularity of an author is no test of his intrinsic value. One had better not touch Homer, or Dante, or Camoens, if one has contracted the habit of reading to kill time. To enjoy their company we need the contrary habit of reading to treasure up our passing hours in undying recollections. To read the great authors of the past is a duty for all who are real particles of the human intelligence. If one lets his taste for the writings of the day absorb him, he overlooks that sacred duty of watching over the pre-

cious deposits of the human mind, of keeping fresh and retentive the memory of our race, of increasing its touch with the past the more it drifts away from us. A humanity, wholly interested in the present, losing gradually its memory, unable to enjoy what should be its greatest pleasure: that of living anew by recollection in its ages of art and poetry and legend, would be a sad sight, however great the material development around it. Any shrinking of human imagination would be fatal to mind and heart, however great might be the increase of discovery. I do not think any such caution from a stranger is needed at your hearth, no more than one from a barbarian on the keeping of the palladium would be needed at the house of the Roman Vestals. I simply explain my coming here to speak of Camoens and not of the passing literature of the day.

I thought his name deserved to awake the echoes of this Institution, which stands so far ahead of our times, if the whole of mankind is considered. Immigration was the greatest human fact of the nineteenth century, and the social progress of woman will be the greatest human fact of the twentieth. Both are as yet principally American facts. As to the first, the *LUSIADS* can be called the Poem of Immigration. As to the second, there is nothing expressed in it about the idea that inspired the creation of Vassar College; but if the means are left in the shade, the end is in full light in the poem, and woman, as Camoens has drawn her, is the noblest type that could be carved by centuries of the highest education. To speak and to act like his Venus, his Queen Maria; to die like his Ignez de Castro, or his Dona Leonor de Sá, supposes and requires the crystallisation of the soul as a divine mirror, which certainly would be the goal of education, if all

education had not of necessity to be content with a limit, in order to give a higher average.

Were love to be banished from life, from literature and from art, the *LUSIADS*, like the *ILIAD*, and the *ODYSSEY*, and the *BIBLE*, would cease to count for mankind; but however supremely love might be purified by Religion and moral dignity, the *LUSIADS* would keep intact its heat and its light. You will find in its poetry the soul of the Renaissance purified by the breath of Chivalry. It is the poem of heroism as well as that of love; the poem of Neptune as the poem of Venus; that is, it represents the combined power of the two poles of mankind: the masculine and the feminine.

In one single respect familiarity with the *LUSIADS* might be of some danger for women: it might make them too conscious of their power. Already in the relations of Venus with Jupiter at the beginning the force of the womanly appeal shows itself irresistible. Throughout the poem beauty and gentleness operate miracles, which, although disguised under mythological garb, are really symbolic of the power of woman. But I think you are taught here not to abuse that power.

Future alumnae of Vassar, I am glad to bring to you the greetings of your fellow students of Brazil. Our country has a title to your sympathy: she has paid the highest possible compliment to woman by rejecting, when a Monarchy, the Salic Law, and alone, of the American nations, she was ruled over by a woman. Among the daughters of our Continent none, except your Mrs. Beecher Stowe, could claim precedence in History before the Brazilian Princess, who attached her name to our two great Acts for the Emancipation of the Slaves. We are proud of the magnifi-

cent part of the earth God gave to us and of many of our national features, but by far our greatest pride is the Brazilian woman, and our hope is that higher education will enlarge her mind without touching at her heart. We can well have that assurance, as this is the greatest experience of Vassar College.

I feel most grateful to President Taylor for the great opportunity he gave me of speaking to you of Camoens. If I were to make a votive tablet for Matthew Vassar in Camonian style I would only have to alter two words of the stanza of the *LUSIADS* in honor of the poet-king Dom Diniz, the founder of Coimbra University:

"It was he who first caused the high craft of Minerva to be practised *by woman* and who made the Muses desert the Helicon to tread the rich verdure of *the Hudson*. All that could be expected from Athens is given here by proud Apollo; here he distributes the wreaths of 'baccharis and evergreen laurel twined with gold.'"

—III, 97.

Fez primeiro *em Coimbra* exercitar-se  
O valeroso officio de Minerva;  
E de Helicon as Musas fez passar-se  
A pizar *do Mondego* a fertil herva.  
Quanto pode d' Athenas desejar-se,  
Tudo o soberbo Apollo aqui reserva:  
Aqui as capellas dá tecidas de ouro,  
Do baccharo, e do sempre verde louro.

III, 97.









## THE LUSIADS AS THE EPIC OF LOVE

---

*Gentlemen of Cornell University:*

For the third time I appear before an American College as a Camonian Rhapsode; alas! not, like the Greek Rhapsodes, to repeat the poet's own verses, but to translate them into foreign prose, taking away much of his power. No doubt the highest part of Poetry is thought, communicable from man to man through any language, and therefore the BIBLE and the ILLIAD remain the greatest of all works in whatever language they may be translated. But if the essence of poetry is thought, not sound, which is only a vehicle for it, the question of impressing thought is a very important one. The original verse, in the poet's own language, has a direct grasp upon the memory and makes mind resound with it throughout life, while the prose translation does not interest the auditive, the musical mechanism of mind.

The other night, at Vassar College, I made Camoens introduce himself as a love singer. To-night he will appeal to you as the Poet of Love; that is, you will see the lyric poet changing into the epic. I hope these Addresses on Camoens will call the attention of a few among the American students to one of the greatest names of modern Literature and to the beauty and poetry of our language. I am often asked to speak in Spanish, so general is the belief here that in Brazil we speak Spanish. The expression Spanish America is

used here for the whole of Latin America. I have no objection to it in the old historical sense of the word *Hispania*, although we generally employ the word *Iberia* in that sense. But Portuguese is a very distinct language from Spanish, and was bound to have a different literature. Both are transformations of Latin, with few signs of a different national formation between the two, but the ear of the Peninsula peoples that divided into two Nations was somewhat different, and the differences introduced by it in their common Latin speech were sufficient to form languages of different resonance.

There are words which are the exclusive flowers of a language and which by their constant use, as some trees show the kind of lands where they grow, reveal the character of the race speaking that language, or of the epoch when they come in full blossom. The difference between Portuguese and Spanish could not be better shown than by the predominance in Portuguese of the word *saudade* and its premature death in Spanish. With reference to this word you should read the note of Prof. Henry R. Lang, of Yale University, in his book, *CANCIONEIRO GALLEGO-CASTELHANO* (pp. 199-201).

The bulk of Portuguese, at the time of the foundation of the Monarchy, was the Galician dialect, that is, Latin as it was spoken in Galicia. Autonomy under a French ruler, Henry of Burgundy, brought about in the new Lusitania a different national tendency, which local influences widened each day. Spanish shows the Arabic influence more than Portuguese, not perhaps so much in the vocabulary as in its guttural harshness. The greatest boast of the Portuguese language is expressed by Camoens, explaining Venus's love for.

the Portuguese by their similitude with her old Romans, mainly in their language, "which, when she thinks, seems to her with light corruption to be the Latin."

E na lingua na qual quando imagina  
Com pouca corrupção crê que é a Latina.

'After saying a word on the language, I will say one on the country. Small as Portugal was, her mark in history may be well compared to that of Spain, as during nearly a century the genius of navigation, the secret of the Ocean, was hers. There is no name in Portugal in the field of art to be opposed to Velasquez, or Murillo, or Goya. She has no Cathedrals to be compared to those of Burgos or Toledo. Nothing to rival the Alhambra. Yet if you put all that together in a scale of the balance, adding to it *DON QUIXOTE*, and put the *LUSIADS* in the other, I doubt which would weigh more, just as if all ancient Art was weighed against the *ILLIAD*, I believe Homer's scale would remain immovable.

You know the Poet's life. There is nothing of importance added to it since Longfellow's sketch. His ancestors possessed a manor in Galicia, and to it is attached the legend of the bird called *camão*, which would die of grief if it saw unfaithful the lady of the house, as he says in one of his love-verses.

Experimentou-se algum' hora  
Da ave, que chamam *camão*,  
Que se da casa onde mora  
Vê adultera a Senhora  
Morre de pura paixão . . .

Let us hope that the bird which gave his name to the family justified the wronged lady before her husband

and that they took his name out of gratitude for him. But, one way or the other, the legend shows that love was an influence with the Camoens. With the poet it was a fatal influence, except that it fed him, so to say, from the cradle to do the great work of his life. Love was the cause of his exile from Lisbon, of his relegation to Africa, of his imprisonment, of his engagement for India, of all his adversities, but the cause also of his glory. It kept him in a kind of useless life, which was, however, the only one fit to produce his immortal masterpiece. There is nothing sure about his loves, except that he was always unfortunate in them and that he never repented of loving. There is a tendency to reduce them all to one, but we really do not know how many they were, nor the difference of intensity and earnestness between them. No one can say if his references are to the same person, nor who she was. No doubt one love which he depicts as a life affair, writing in his maturity, eclipses the others, but he might have forgotten. Worst of all, it is impossible to identify the young lady to whom his most beautiful and saddest complaints went. Several young women of his time have their champions, although none appears herself as a postulant for glory.

Of all rival claims that is the most delicate for one to arbitrate upon, as there is the risk of robbing a woman of her immortality. I do not know if it is quite safe to limit the selection to the ladies of the Court named Catherina, although Catherina, whoever she was, may remain her name for history, her literary pseudonym. There is no allusion by the hand of Camoens himself to any Catherina; the name was brought out before posterity long after his death, and comes from no document whose authenticity one could

really ascertain. All that can be said is that he wrote verses to one Catherina, unless he wrote them to two. The Queen being a Catherina, the young Catherinas certainly abounded in the Court.

In his youth and prime Camoens was a constant writer of love-verses, and only the misfortunes of his life, caused probably by the daring of his love ambitions, would make him soar so much higher. Some indiscretion in his love affairs caused his exile from the Royal Court, and, after it, his enlistment to fight the Moors in Africa, where he was wounded and lost one of his eyes. This wound marks an epoch for the Portuguese literature. His hopes as a general courtier were dispelled by it, his pride as a lover was withered, and he felt at the mercy of anyone who looked at his disfigured face. He calls himself "Polyphemus," while his beloved one is "Galatea." It makes all difference in love if one receives a deformity.

It is impossible not to notice the strange means that Fate employs to bring the Poets to give their best, as fortune does not bring forth the same kind of work as misfortune, and there is nothing more pathetic than the soaring above circumstances, by which genius insists in serving his inspiration. In fact, the great poet, as a human creator, leads a double and contrary life: enjoying real bliss in the companionship of his creatures during his greatest personal sorrows, and suffering agonies with them during his own raptures. Without Milton's blindness his *PARADISE* would have been a very different composition, and without Camoens' disfigurement his poetical work would probably have all been of the personal kind. It was that wound that made him give up in despair love, court life, Lisbon, Portugal, and to open his sail in the direction of the

LUSIADS. Nearly all great men would have preferred power, honors, success in life, the pleasures of wealth, to everlasting fame, if left to themselves. It is fate that, for their sake, either persecutes them from the outside, or turns them into their own persecutors. I do not know how it will be henceforth. Among the many new departures brought about in our times, there is the creation of a literary profession. What was before a vocation is now a lucrative career. Only a very high conscience will stop a dealer on the way to fortune from taking advantage of the public favor and from watering his inspiration. I am afraid that opulence will upset all the noble traditions of a craft, which misfortune has played so large a part in purifying and subliming. It is true that the cycle of Literature seems to be already closed, the goal of the human ideal having been attained in it, as well as in Painting, Sculpture, Architecture, Music and Religion.

During years and years Camoens was a Petrarca, finding in his own feelings an endless source of poetry. He grew a poet of the highest order, drawing only upon his loves, until he wrote that inimitable *Canção* (*Canzone*) the eleventh, which of all his lyric poems I would like to read to you for you to understand better how and why love had the greatest part in the inspiration of the LUSIADS. It is such a strain of harmony as rarely came from the heart of a poet, passing in review his life, all given to love, and all spent in false hopes and wasted affections. I did not bring it, because there would be no time during this address for you to forget the man and follow serenely the evolution of the poet.

In despair of finding protection and good-will around him, Camoens, to save himself from the prison where he was confined, enlisted for military service in India



and left Portugal in the spring of 1553. It was a long voyage of about six months, much exposed to shipwreck, and to fatal diseases. During that voyage he gathered the inspiration of the *LUSIADS*; not, probably, that he then had the conception of the Poem, but that he conceived the part which the sea and the ship-life will play in it. Then, in India, the voyage of Vasco da Gama, who opened those seas, grows on him and becomes the tie of the whole composition. Its aim is to celebrate the doings of the *LUSIADS*, the progeny of *Lusus*, son of *Bacchus*. When he was shipwrecked, at the mouth of the Mekong, between 1559 and 1560, his Poem was as good as complete. There is no reason for dismissing the legend that he worked on it during his stay at Macao in China. The filial piety of the Portuguese-speaking races will forever remain attached to that far-Eastern shrine. He may have added to the Poem during his stay in Mozambique, in 1567, and until its publication; but the time that the inspiration of his work lasted, cannot have been so long as his stay in India. It is a law of genius that the same inspiration cannot remain unbroken for many years, much less for a whole life.

The three principal factors in the composition of the *LUSIADS* are the poet's life-habit of love, his really extraordinary stores of classic knowledge, and his national ambition. There is a tradition that, either in Sofala or Mozambique, Camoens woke up a morning in great joy, saying he would write a great song, as if the idea and the plan of the *LUSIADS* had been revealed to him. I can well believe in this *eureka* the moment that the national ambition struck the immense material he had accumulated and the fountain of poetry he had

in his mind. That morning the personal phase of the poet ended. Art turned love, which had been for him a personal obsession, into a divine sense; converted the poisonous blade, with which he only tortured himself, into the chisel, that would carve the national Poem.

I commented at Yale University on six great impressions of the *LUSIADS*: country worship; the poetry of the sea; mythology; the age of discovery; the spirit of the Renaissance, and, lastly, the law of the greatest effort in life. I reserved to present it at some other time, which happens to be now, as the poem of love, and I hope to have still an occasion, in my wanderings as its propagandist, to turn to the light other of its most brilliant facets. Indeed, if you study the *LUSIADS*, you will see that two parallel chains run through it: there is the patriotic chain and the love chain, each with its distinct summits, such as, for the first: the Invocation to Dom Sebastian, the battle of Ourique, the battle of Aljubarrota, Dom Manoel's dream, the departure of Vasco da Gama from Belem, the doubling of the Cape of Good Hope, to speak only of the first Cantos, and as for the love chain, those truly radiant summits: Venus before Jupiter in the first Canto, Ignez de Castro in the third, Adamastor in the fifth, the forge of Cupid and the Isle of Love in the ninth.

You will excuse me for translating myself what I will read to you. There are several translations of Camoens in English verse, but in all of them there is a strong collaboration of the translator with him, and I like him better alone. It is invaluable the service they have done for him, they make many read him who would not have read him in English prose, and I owe much to them in my own translations, but I think the

true poetry of the *LUSIADS*, when deprived of its music, appears better in foreign prose.

To show that the *LUSIADS* is the poem of Love, it is enough to say that it is the poem of Venus. Camoens did not fear the *Æneid*, and all who compare his Venus with that of Vergil will agree that the question: *Which of the Venuses is the most beautiful?* is an insoluble problem in literature, as it is in Statuary or Painting. The pictures of Venus by Camoens are the *pendant* in poetry of the frescoes of Venus in the Farnesina by Raphael. With her, all throughout the poem, the power of love is made to appear the dominant force of the Universe.

After the incomparable picture of Venus in the second Canto, the great love page of the *LUSIADS* is the tale of *Ignês de Castro*. The story of Ignês de Castro, called, from her long neck, *Collo de Garça*, Heron's Neck, is widely known. She was a young dame at the service of Dona Constança, the wife of Prince Dom Pedro, heir to King Affonso IV. The Princess died shortly after her marriage and for ten years Dom Pedro and Inez thought only of enjoying their love in the greatest privacy. The possibility of her ascending the throne together with his son incensed the old King against her and rival courtiers, by his order or with his consent, killed her in Coimbra in the absence of her lover. The tradition of the time is that they had been secretly married. A few years after her death, the Prince, coming to the throne, took a most cruel vengeance on those of her murderers who could not escape him, and had her remains removed from Coimbra and given a royal tomb at the Monastery of Alcobaça, where she lies by his side. The legend sung by Camoens is that he crowned

her in death and that her exhumed body received the vasselage of the nobility and the people seated by his side in all the pomp of royalty. The whole history of Royalty does not record a similar coronation.

I will read you the episode of Ignez de Castro, only being sorry that you cannot hear it in the melodious and pathetic stanzas of Camoens.

"That prosperous victory once over, Affonso returned to his own realm to enjoy peace with so much glory as he had won in the hard fought war, when occurred the sad case, worthy its fame, which lifts up the dead from their tombs, of the frail and unhappy maid, who was made a Queen after her death.

"Thou alone, pure love, with that crude force which binds to its will every human heart, were the cause of her being murdered, as if she were an enemy of thine. If it is said, cruel love, that thy thirst is not even quenched with the saddest tears, it is because, harsh tyrant, thou wishest thy altars bathed with human blood.

"Thou wert resting, fair Ignez, in perfect quiet, enjoying the sweet fruit of thy youth, in that gay and blind delusion of the soul, which Fortune does not allow to last, there in the never forgotten meadows of the Mondego, never dry of the tears of thy lovely eyes, teaching the hills and the shrubs the name thou hadst engraved in thy breast.

"Therein answered thee the remembrances which always dwelt in the soul of thy Prince, and which ever brought thee back to his eyes, when apart from thy fair ones: by night in pleasant lying dreams, by day, in thoughts, that flew away; but all that he dreamt or saw were memories of your common happiness.

"He refuses the much desired nuptials of other fair Ladies and Princesses, as thou, pure Love, scornest everything when a suave mien captivates thee. Seeing those enamoured whims, the grave old father who respects the murmuring of his people and the freedom of his son who will not marry,

"Determines to take Ignez away from the world to take from her his enchained son, believing that only the blood of an unworthy death could extinguish the burning fire of his firm love. What madness let the fine sword, which had sustained the whole weight of the Moorish fury, be raised against a feeble and delicate woman!

"The horrible hangmen were bringing her before the King, already moved to compassion, but the people with false and ferocious reasons.

persuaded him again to the foul murder, when she began to entreat the cruel grandfather, with sad and pitiful words inspired by the regret and remembrance of her Prince and of their little children whom she had to forsake, which grieved her more than death itself.

"Raising her tearful eyes to the crystalline skies, as her hands were being tied by the hard and pitiless Ministers, and then bringing them down upon her children so dear and so sweet, whose fate as orphans dismayed her, she thus addressed the King:

"If already wild beasts, whose minds nature has made so cruel from birth, and birds of prey, only intent on aerial rapine, have shown so tender feelings towards little children, as with the mother of Ninus and the twin founders of Rome;

"Thou who hast the features and the heart of a man, if it is of a man to murder a feeble and defenseless girl, only for having subdued the heart of him who succeeded in winning her, respect these little children, since thou dost not stop before her own dark death; let thyself be moved by compassion of me and of them, since it does not move thee my being innocent.

"And if, overcoming the Moorish resistance, thou knowest how to deal death by iron and fire, learn also how to deal life by clemency, to one who did not commit any fault to forfeit it. Still if my innocence deserves so much from thee, place me in a perpetual and wretched exile, in cold Scythia or in burning Lyberia, where I may ever live in tears.

"Place me where all ferocity would await me, amidst lions and tigers, and I will see if I can find in them the pity I did not find in human breasts. There with intrinsic love, and with all my will put in him for whom I die, I will rear up these relics of him, which you saw here, as a relief for the lonely mother."

"The benign King wished to pardon, moved as he was by words that pierced him; but the stubborn people and her fate did not forgive her. Holding such a deed to be right, they drew their swords of fine steel. O butcherly hearts, how fierce you show yourselves against a lady, you knights!

"As against the lovely maiden Polyxena, the last solace of her aged mother, the cruel Pyrrhus arms himself with his sword, because the shade of Achilles condemns her, and she, as the patient and sweet lamb, offers herself to the sacrifice, resting her eyes, which calm the air around, upon her unhappy mother, mad with grief.

"Thus against Ignez the brute murderers, bathing their blades in the neck of alabaster which sustained the works with which Love killed with love him who later will make her a Queen, and

tinging with blood the white flowers she had watered with her tears, glowed with fury, not dreaming of the future avengement.

"Well mightest thou, O Sun, have diverted that day thy rays from their eyes, as thou didst from the dire table of Thyestes, when he ate his own children through the hand of Atreus. You, concave valleys, that could hear the last sounds from her cold mouth, you echoed for long spaces the name of her Pedro.

"So as the candid and lovely daisy, cut before time, loses its perfume and its hues, spoiled by the heedless hand of the maid who had it in her wreath, so lies dead the pale young damsel, the roses of her cheek all faded, her white live color gone with her sweet life.

"Weeping, the daughters of the Mondego, long remembered the sombre death and, as an eternal memorial, converted the wept tears into a pure fountain. They gave it the name, which still lasts, of the loves of Ignez spent on its banks. See what a fresh spring bathes the flowers! Its waters are tears and its name Love."

This is the end of the story of Ignez de Castro. Now the two stanzas in which the Poet sketches the reign of her husband, called Dom Pedro o Crú, Dom Pedro-the-Hard. The death of Ignez traced out his mission as that of an exterminator of crime.

"Not much time elapsed before Pedro wreaked the vengeance of his mortal wounds, since he fell upon the fugitive murderers as soon as he took the reins of power. They were surrendered to him by another Pedro, most cruel, as the two had no pity for human life and made between them the dire and unjust compact which Augustus made with Lepidus and Anthony.

"This one was rigorous chastiser of robberies, of murders and of adulteries; his most certain solace was to commit cruelties in his wrath against the bad ones, while, in his justice, keeping cities free from the oppression of the powerful lords. He gave death to more robbers than wandering Alcides and Theseus."

There are not among the royal tombs in Europe any two linked together by such strong tie of poetry as the twin ones, of Dom Pedro, called the Hard, and the sweet posthumous Queen, Dona Ignez de Castro, at Alcobaça. Nor is there a more poetical spot than the

Quinta das Lagrimas, in Coimbra, the Quinta of Tears, with its stately trees and its waters, consecrated to the imperishable legend of the loves of Ignez.

You all have heard of the greatest creation of Camoens in the LUSIADS, the huge and ugly giant who had the guard of the Cape of Storms. In a book of 1803, Clarke's PROGRESS OF MARITIME DISCOVERY, a true monument to the Portuguese achievements, there is a frontispiece plate entitled the *Spectre of the Cape*, which is a worthy illustration of the episode of Adamastor. A gigantic dark cloud hangs over the Cape tableland, the storm flashes in the East, Vasco da Gama's ship, with her foresail torn to pieces, plunges on a quaking sea. There is all around a display of the furies of Nature that corresponds to the verses: "What threat from Heaven or what secret does this climate and this sea present to us that appears mightier even than tempest?"

Que ameago divino ou que segredo  
Este clima e este mar nos apresenta  
Que mór cousa parece que tormenta?

What is characteristic of Camoens is that while he makes of Adamastor a horrid evocation, with "a frowning visage, a squalid beard, deep-sunk eyes, an awful posture, the colour pale and earthy, the crispy hair loaded with clay, the mouth black and the teeth deep yellow," and while he personifies in him the blind and relentless forces that opposed the advance of man on sea, he gives him the tenderest heart that any lover ever had. Even in his terrifying prophecies the giant shows himself sensible to the woes of love, as in his touching picture of the death of Sepulveda and of his beautiful young wife in the sands of Africa. The part

he is made to play, of barring the sea gate of the East, does not leave so deep impression on us as the tale of his love, upon which even eternity seems to have no power. Poetry for Camoens, if not limited to love, was always convertible into love, at its higher power.

Modern literature has added no myth but this one to the grand series of Homer and Hesiod. Adamastor is, as Ignez de Castro, one of the triumphs of love in the *LUSIADS*. I will translate the narrative which the giant makes of his metamorphosis, for you to say if ancient Poetry left a finer creation than this. Truly the age capable of adding to the old Mythology a myth that would have enriched it, richly deserves the name of Renaissance.

"I am that hidden and great Cape which you named of Tempests, never known to Ptolemy, Pomponius, Strabo, Pliny, nor to any of those who passed. . . . Here I end all the African coast on this my never seen promontory, which extends towards the Antarctic Pole, whom your presumption now so much offends.

"I was one of the fiercest sons of Earth, like Enceladus, Ægeus and the Centiman; my name was Adamastor, and I took part in the war against him that hurls Vulcan's bolts; not that I piled hill upon hill, but, conquering the waves of the ocean, I was Captain of the sea, where wandered the fleet of Neptune, which I was pursuing.

"Love for the noble spouse of Peleus led me to undertake such great enterprise. I scorned all the goddesses of Heaven only to love the princess of the waters. One day I saw her with the daughters of Nereus come out all bare on the shore and at once my will was so enslaved that even now I do not feel anything that I long so much for.

"As it would be impossible to obtain her through the ugly hugeness of my face, I determined to take her by arms and I told Doris of my intent. The Goddess in dread speaks to her for me, but she with an honest and candid laughter replied: 'What love of a Nymph would be enough to bear that of a giant?'

" 'Still to free the ocean from so much war, I will seek a way to excuse my honour and to avoid the harm.' The messenger brought me that answer, and, as the lover's blindness is great, I would not



see the snare and my bosom was filled with abundance of raptures and hopes.

"Fooled, renouncing already war, one night promised by Doris, I saw at a distance the beautiful form of the white Thetis, alone unrobbed. Like mad, I run from afar, opening my arms to her who was the life of this body, and I begin to kiss her lovely eyes, her cheeks and her hair.

"Oh, from humiliation I hardly can say more. Thinking I had in my arms the loved one, I found myself embracing a rugged mountain of the harshest wood. Standing, face to face, before a stone which I clasped for the angelic figure, I remained not a man, but deaf and motionless, and close to a rock, another rock.

"Oh, Nymph the most fair of the ocean, since my presence does not please thee, what would it cost to keep me in this deceit, were it mountain, cloud, dream or nought? Raging and well nigh insane from the grief and the shame suffered there, I left in search of another world where none would scoff at my tears and my despair.

"Meanwhile my brethren were vanquished and in extremest misery placed, some, for the greater surety of the Gods, lying beneath various superposed mountains, and, as against Heaven hands are of no avail, I began, while weeping my misfortune, to receive from an enemy Fate the penalty for my audacity.

"My flesh is converted into solid earth, my bones into rocks, and these limbs, which thou seest, and this form were extended along these long waters; at last, my enormous stature was changed by the Gods into this remote Cape and, to double my woes, Thetis is surrounding me with her waves." (V, 50-59.)

It is with a full hand that he scatters love in his poetry. This touch, for instance, in the description of a storm:

"The alcyon birds raised their melancholy song near the wild coast, remembering their own fate caused by the furious waves; the enamoured Dolphins entered the sea caverns for shelter against the fierce winds, which do not let them remain secure even in the deep." (VI, 77.)

"As halcyoneas aves triste canto  
Juncto da costa brava levantaram,  
Lembrando-se de seu passado pranto,  
Que as furiosas aguas lhe causaram.  
Os dolphins namorados entretanto

La nas covas maritimas entraram,  
Fugindo á tempestade, e ventos duros,  
Que nem no fundo os deixa estar seguros."

When Venus sees from her morning star the danger of her favorite crew, she at once bids her Nymphs go and conquer the winds.

"And so it was done, for as soon as the winds come into their sight, the strength with which they were fighting fails them and surrendering they obey. It seems that their hands and feet were tied by tresses that dim the light."

And the poet tells us the sweet reproaches of Orithya "the most beautiful" to Boreas:

"Do not believe, wild Boreas, that I believe thou ever felt for me a constant love, as sweetness is the surest array of love and fury does not suit a true lover. If thou dost not put at once a rein to so much insanity, do not hope me henceforth to love you, but only to fear you, as with thee love is turned into fright."

Copy *Lusiads* 6°, Canto LXXXIX.

"Não creias, fero Bóreas, que te creio  
Que me tiveste nunca amor constante;  
Que brandura é de amor mais certo arreio,  
E não convem furor a firme amante:  
Se já não pões a tanta insania freio,  
Não esperes de mi d'aqui em diante,  
Que possa mais amar-te, mas temer-te;  
Que amor contigo em mêdo se converte."

I will only mention another intervention of Venus, when she and the nymphs put their breasts in front of the Portuguese ships to save them from running to certain destruction. I said at Yale that Camoens converted Gama's log-book into poetry. In this case he made use of an incident related in the *Roteiro* of Vasco da Gama that, his ship being reluctant to turn round, when he ordered the dropping again of the anchor, the

native pilots threw themselves overboard for fear that their planned treachery had been discovered.

Everything he touches becomes poetry because of that ray of love. Vasco da Gama arrives in Melinde on an Easter Sunday. Here it is how he dates the event:

"It was at the joyful time when the Phoebeian light was entering the ravisher of Europa and began to illumine both its horns, while Flora poured forth that of Amalthea."

That is the spring with its sun and its flowers.

"The speedy sun, turning round the sky, was again renewing the memory of the day in which He to whom everything is subject put his seal to all he had done."

That is the Resurrection.

Now the description of Cupid's love forge in the Idalian mountains. Camoens is really a combination of two souls: he is a Greek poet, as well as a modern one. Cupid's forge is worth the Greek imagination in all its freshness. Here is the new Camonian myth:

"She (Venus) arrays her chariot with the birds (the swans) who celebrate in life their own exequies and with those (the doves) into which Peristera was changed while gathering daisies. . . . Around the departed goddess sound in the air kisses of love, but, where she passes with a soft gesture she makes serene the skies and the winds.

"She already bends her chariot over the Idalian mountains, where her archer son was assembling many others to make a famous expedition against the rebel world to mend great errors being committed there by people who love things which were given to man, not for love, but for use.

"He saw Acteon so austere in the chase, so blind with its brutal and insane joys, that, to follow a fierce ugly beast, he flies all company and the beautiful human form, and as a chastisement, both sweet and severe, Cupid wishes to show to him the loveliness of Diana. Let him beware not to be devoured by those same hounds he now loves!

"He looks to the highest of the world; none thinks of the public welfare; their love is all for themselves and those for whom Philautia (self-love) teaches them to have regard; he sees those who frequent the royal palaces sell for good and sound doctrine only adulation, which does not consent that the young growing corn (the young King Dom Sebastiam) should be winnowed.

"He sees that those who owe divine love to poverty and charity to the people, only love power and riches, simulating justice and integrity; they turn ugly tyranny into right and call asperity severity. Laws are enacted in favour of the King, and only perish those in favour of the people.

"He sees, in fine, that none loves what he ought to love, but only what he wrongly wishes. He does not think the punishment should be any longer delayed, but that it must come hard and just, and summons therefore his Ministers to take a sufficient army for the fights he expects to have with the ill-governed race, who will not show obedience to him.

"Many of these flying boys are engaged in different works, some sharpening penetrating irons, others thinning arrow stems; and, while working, they sing of love, modulating in verse different episodes, with a sonorous and well adjusted melody, the lay sweet and the song angelical.

"In the immortal furnaces where they were forging the piercing points of their arrows, instead of wood, hearts were burning, many of the human vitals still palpitating; the waters, where they tempered the iron, were tears of unhappy lovers; the vivid flame, the never dying fire, was only desire that burns, yet not consumes."

And in four stanzas more he describes the effects produced among the lowest and the highest of mankind by the shots of the little army of Cupid's "ill-trained boys" and the description of Love's workshop continues until Venus alights from her chariot, in the stanza 36 of the ninth Canto.

This stanza could be given to you in Portuguese as a taste of the music of the language, and of the Poet's sonority. I do not think there are many others in the Poem that show the qualities of Portuguese to greater advantage. I will give it in parts. I will read the first four verses, not surpassed in any language for their rhythm, and which form a most ideal picture.

Mas já no verde prado o carro leve  
 Punham os brancos cysnes mansamente,  
 E Dione, que as rosas entre a neve  
 No rosto traz, descia diligente. . .

"Already in the green meadows the white swans softly depose the light chariot, and Dione, in whose face roses blossom amid snow, promptly allights."

And the Poem ends with that wonderful apotheosis of Love, the Isle of Love, which Venus makes appear before the Portuguese ships and where herself and the Nymphs feast the heroes for their discovery of the new world. I have often referred to that immense poetical fresco, without its equal in literature, which stands to the gardens of Armida as Nature to enchantment.

I will read only the beginning of it:

"From far they saw (the Portugese heroes) the cool and beautiful isle which Venus was pushing to them through the waters, as the wind pushes the white sail, so that they could not fail to see it. But as soon as she saw that they had sighted the island and were sailing to it, she made it firm and immovable, as Delos remained while Latona gave birth to Apollo and Diana. At once the prows cut the sea turned to where the coast forms a little bay, curved and quiet, whose white sands Cytherea paints with rosy shells.

"In the lovely and delightful isle three beautiful hills were seen rising with a graceful pride and all enamelled with grass; clear fountains spring from the summit, covered with shining verdure, and the fugitive sonorous water glides softly amid the white pebbles.

"The clear streams join together in a delightful valley that opens the hills and form a table as beautiful as could be imagined. A fine grove of trees hangs over it, as if to adorn themselves, by seeing their perfect image in the brilliant mirror.

"A thousand trees grow to the skies with odoriferous and fair fruits, like the orange which has the hue that Daphne had in her hair. . . . .

And so on, in other stanzas, about the fruits. And then:

"The lovely and fine tapestry that covers the earth takes much of their beauty off the Achemenian ones, (the Persian), but renders sweeter the shady valley. Here the Cephisian flower (the narcissus) inclines its head over the serene and transparent pond, and blossoms the son and grandson of Cinyra's (Adonis converted into the anemone) for whom thou, Paphian goddess, still sighest."

And after some more stanzas describing the flowers with those fine touches of legend, he brings forth the Nymphs:

"It was amid all this freshness that the second Argonauts left their ships for the woods where the beautiful goddesses allowed themselves to remain, as if they knew nothing, some playing sweet citharas, others harps or sonorous flutes, while others, with golden bows, feigned to follow animals they did not follow."

And then the chase of the Goddesses by the Discoverers runs through more of twenty stanzas, the whole Canto Ninth being really given to the Isle of Love. It is a wonderful composition, of exquisite beauty in many of its details, in unsurpassed grandeur in its whole. It would be enough to characterize Camoens as the Poet of Love, if he had written nothing else. I must add, it is as pure as a heavenly vision, the love in Poetry and Religion being purified of all earthly corruption, the Houris of the Mohammedan Paradise, the Valkyrs of the Valhalla, the Nymphs of the Isle of Love being so many allegories of glory, of hero-immortality.

Camoens would not, however, have been the complete Poet of Love he was if the dying or dead Chivalry had no part in his Poem. It has, in the episode of twelve Portuguese knights, who went to England to fight a tournament for twelve wronged English ladies that had found no defenders among their own countrymen.

I hope I have justified my view that Camoens' great-

est source of inspiration was love. He accustomed himself to love, in love he transformed everything, and, when he ceased to care for women and absorbed himself in the national Poem, his experiences made him give true life to every episode in which love played a part; he understood love as the controlling force of life as well as of Nature, the principal means of the Ideal, the source of all creation, love, but not its spurious homonyms, which he so strongly condemns in his Poem.

The teaching of the *LUSIADS* could be resumed in the lesson for men to defeat Death, quoting the verses of its opening stanzas:

Aquelles que por obras valerosas  
Se vão da lei da morte libertando.

“Those who by noble deeds are freeing themselves from the law of death.

Or, as Sir Richard Fanshaw translated them into Elisabethan English:

. . . and Those who by  
Their deeds at home left not their names defac't.

The Poem is thus a school of immortality; not of personal immortality only, of collective immortality, such as that of the unknown Discoverers and Conquerors, who surrounded Vasco da Gama, and of love aiming at its highest mark, that which makes the immortal ones. In everything he commends the high kind of love, as “the low enfeebles the strong.”

Que um baixo amor os fortes enfraquece.

III, 139.

Speaking of the selection of Vasco da Gama and of his crew, he will say:

"They were rewarded by Manuel, so that they armed themselves with greater love, and were encouraged with high words for all labors that might come. So were collected together the Minyas to fight for the golden veil, in the fatidic galley, which dared, adventurous, to tempt the first the Euxine sea."

*Fatidic*, because the ship Argo was made from trees of the prophetic forest of Dodona.

"Assi foram os Minyas ajuntados  
Para que o veo dourado combatessem,  
Na fatidica nau, que ousou primeira  
Tentar o mar Euxino, aventureira."

IV, 83.

Has this not the ring of the noblest human language, that in which love, duty and religion are made one?

Gentlemen, I have finished my third call among American students as a Camonian pilgrim, and I can assure you that I do not feel at all ashamed of begging for his glory. When I see his great Poem so completely ignored as it is in foreign countries, I do not grieve for him. What does it matter to Antarès, or to Sirius, if they are not seen in all their grandeur by all men? A few telescopes turned on them suffice to their glory in our little planet. But Camoens has a greater solace than the admiration of the few. The Portuguese language will always be called "the language of Camoens," while no poet in the world has more the devotion of his own people, nay, of all who speak his language, than he. No foreigner that would read of the national celebration of his third centenary, in 1880, both in Portugal and Brazil, would doubt that. Those were divine honors. Two nations could not have rendered them to a poet three centuries after his death if he had not left in the hearts and minds of all who speak his language an inspiration, a cohesive and elevating



impulse, which only true creators can kindle forever. Homer has no readers compared with the writers of the day, still we must not fear for him.

There is now about forty years that I follow the march of literature, and its relative place in the world seems to me to become each day smaller. This, we must remember, is no longer the Age of writing; it is already the Age of typewriting. The Manuscript is dead. I doubt if the affinities of inspiration with the machine will ever be the same as with the pen. Allow me to express to you my whole faith. I do not believe that there is anywhere through heavens a register for money deals, however great; but I believe there is one for intellectual creations, and that the work of Homer, Dante, Camoens, Shakespere, and their like, transcends the Earth.













